

• THE •  
• CITY • COMPANIES •  
• OF • LONDON •



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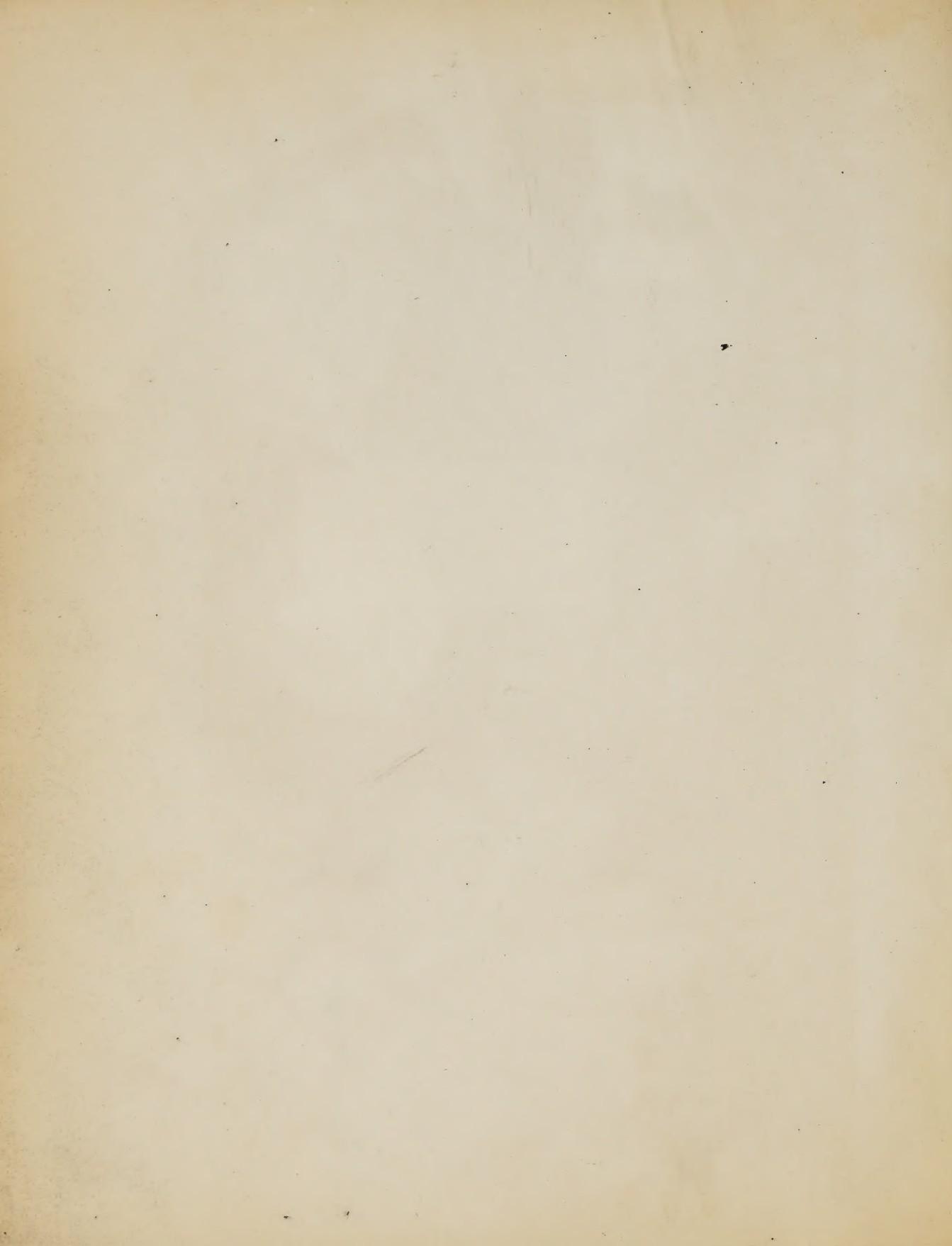
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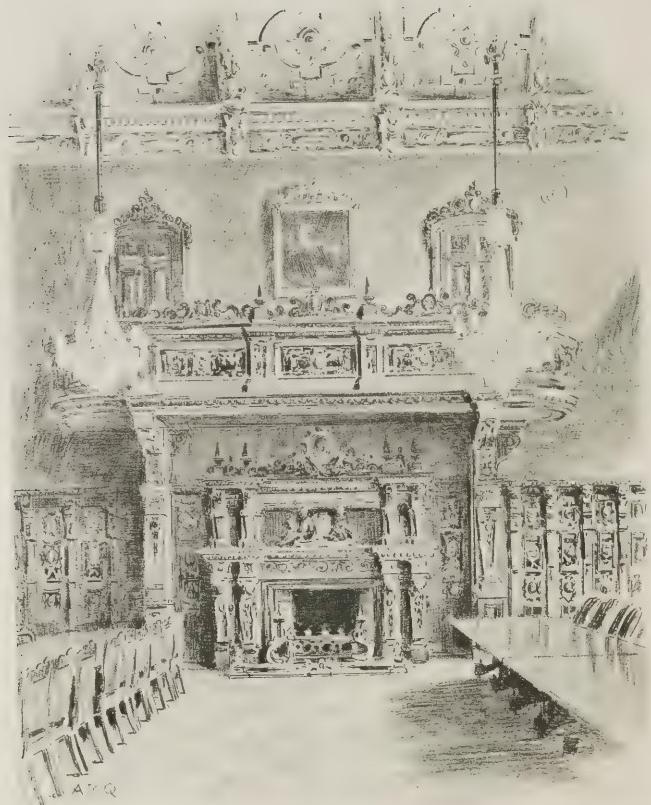
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*Fireplace in the Banqueting Hall  
of the Ironmongers' Company*

# THE CITY COMPANIES OF LONDON

AND THEIR GOOD WORKS:

A RECORD OF THEIR  
HISTORY, CHARITY  
AND TREASURE

BY

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"English Villages," etc., etc.



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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
SIR JAMES THOMSON RITCHIE, BART.,  
LORD MAYOR OF LONDON,  
THIS ACCOUNT OF THE CITY GUILDS,  
ASSOCIATED FOR CENTURIES WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CITY OF LONDON,  
AND FROM THE RANKS OF WHICH  
THE LORD MAYORS HAVE FROM TIME IMMEMORIAL BEEN CHOSEN,  
IS DEDICATED WITH MUCH RESPECT,  
AND WITH HIS LORDSHIP'S KIND PERMISSION,  
BY THE AUTHOR.



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## P R E F A C E

IN spite of the publication of several learned works on the history of the Livery Companies of the City of London, and although the exhaustive Report of the Royal Commission was issued several years ago, there still remains in the popular mind much misconception concerning these important institutions, and ignorance concerning the vast schemes of benevolence and charity which they administer. “Blue Books” are not always attractive volumes, and learned and costly works are not within the reach of general readers, except in our public libraries, where they too often remain in dusty oblivion ; hence few persons are acquainted with the unique and interesting history of the London City Companies, the important part which they have played in our country’s annals, and the very considerable benefits which they confer at the present time upon the nation of England.

When we visit the ancient homes of these great societies we are impressed by their magnificence and interesting associations. Portraits of old City worthies and royal benefactors gaze at us from the walls, and link our time with theirs, when they, too, strove to uphold the honour of their Guild and benefit their generation. Many a quaint, old-time custom and curious ceremonial usage linger on within the old halls, and there too are enshrined cuirass and targe, helmet, sword and

## PREFACE

buckler, which tell the story of the past and of the part the Companies played in national defence or in the protection of civic rights. Turning down some little alley and entering the portals of one of their halls, we are transported at once from the busy streets and din of modern London into a region of old-world memories which has a fascination that is all its own. A careful study of each Company's history well rewards the toiler's search.

In these days of restless inquiry all great institutions are liable to be attacked and examined with the closest scrutiny. The great wealth of the Companies was sufficient to attract the attention of hungry reformers. The City Companies were not in the habit of proclaiming their charity to the world. They never paraded their good deeds. They ever held themselves responsible for the judicious, wise, and careful administration of their funds, and they were indifferent either to the censure or commendation of their unscrupulous opponents. The reformers, ignorant of the good work which the Companies were doing, raised a cloud of prejudice and aspersion ; they uttered many very intemperate and inaccurate statements ; they clamoured for a Commission to inquire into the abuses and reckless extravagance of the Companies, who were supposed to spend all their wealth in dinners while Lazarus lay at the gate full of sores. Their wish was granted. A Commission was appointed, and none were more surprised at the results of that careful and close scrutiny than the detractors and would-be reformers. The Companies emerged from the ordeal not only unscathed but renewed and strengthened. They have gained the confidence and support of public opinion. Their venerable customs and unique history endear them to all who admire antiquity

## PREFACE

and desire to retain some of the ancient features of the nation's life ; and the good works which they have so long performed in regard to religion, charity, and education render their position well-nigh secure in the affections of the people.

It is to increase the knowledge of this good that we now write. We hold no brief in the interests of the Companies. They are content to do their work quietly and unobtrusively, and court neither public approval nor censure on their management of what has legally been pronounced to be their own property. We write rather in the interests of justice and of right, and we trust that the bounteous hand of the Livery Companies of the City of London may never be stayed or paralysed.

Some years ago I was invited by Canon Erskine Clarke to contribute a series of articles on "The City Companies and their Good Works" to *Church Bells*, which articles form the basis of this book, and I desire to express my cordial thanks to the present proprietors of that newspaper for their kind permission to make use of what I then wrote. Much, however, has been re-written, the record of the munificence of the Companies revised, and the historical annals tested by subsequent investigation. It is hoped that this book may be useful in reminding the members of each fraternity of what their Company has done and is still doing for the benefit of the world, and in promoting a juster appreciation of the high lineage of the Livery Companies of London, of their distinguished past, and of the noble part they play in the drama of our modern life.







THE GUILDHALL

# The City Companies and their Good Works

## INTRODUCTION

*History of the London Companies.*—The Livery Companies were originally of the nature of guilds, which have played so important a part in “the making of England.” They date from early Saxon times, and were usually of a religious type. They resembled in some respects our modern friendly societies, and provided a scheme of mutual assurance for their members. Mr Toulmin Smith thus describes the old Saxon guilds :—“The early English guild was an institution of local self-help, which before poor laws were invented took the place of the modern friendly societies, but with a higher aim ; while it joined all classes together in a care for the needy, and for objects of common welfare, it did not neglect the form and practice of religion, justice, and morality.” Each member was a “brother” or a “sister,” and was treated as one of a large family. If he became ill, or poor, or infirm, he was supported by the guild. If his cattle were stolen, or his house blown down, or in case of any loss by fire, flood, shipwreck, or violence, his brethren of the guild would come to the rescue and supply his needs, and repair the loss. When “any good girl of the guild” wanted to be married, the guild provided a dowry for her ; and when any brother or sister died, the guild paid the funeral expenses. If any member wished to go on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St Joseph at Glastonbury, or St Thomas à Becket at Canterbury, or to Rome itself, his brethren helped him on his way, and some guilds provided lodgings for pilgrims when they passed through the town. Some guilds undertook the repair of the parish churches and the expenses of public

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worship, *e.g.*, the Guild of Swaffham, in Norfolk. Each guild had a chaplain, who was paid for exercising the duties of his calling and for praying for the souls of the dead. The repairs of bridges and roads, of walls and city gates, the protection of the fortifications, as well as acts of benevolence, feeding the poor, providing lodgings for strangers and alms-houses for poor townsfolk, were some of the varied benefits which the ancients guilds bestowed upon their age and generation.

A wealth of literature concerning the history of guilds has recently accumulated, and it is only necessary briefly to describe the various kinds of guilds which have existed in this country. The name is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word *geldan* or *gildan*, which means "to pay," and signifies that the members were required to contribute something towards the support of the brotherhood to which they belonged. There were guilds exclusively religious, guilds of the calendars for the clergy, social guilds for the purposes of promoting good fellowship, benevolence, and thrift, merchant guilds for the regulation of trade, and frith guilds for the promotion of peace and the establishment of law and order. The annual feast was held on the day of the patron saint, when the members used to attend church, perform a miracle play, and dine together. In the *Liber Niger* of the Corporation of London there is a description of the anniversary feast of the Guild of the Holy Cross at Abingdon : "The fraternity hold this feast on May 3rd, the Invention of the Holy Cross; they have 12 priests to sing a Dirige, for which they pay 4d. apiece; they have 12 minstrels, who had 2s. 3d., besides their dyet and horse meat." In A.D. 1445 they had "6 calves, 16 lambs, 80 capons, 80 geese, 800 eggs which cost 5d. the 100, and many marrow-bones, cream, and flour; and pageants, plays, and May games to captivate the senses of the beholders."

The most important class were the merchant guilds, which were formed for the purpose of promoting the interests of particular trades, for the regulation of industry; and very strict were the laws which they enforced, and merciless the restrictions which they placed upon all strangers who presumed to sell goods and who did not belong to the

## INTRODUCTION

guild. It was an aristocratic body, composed originally of wealthy merchants, who owned the land on which the town was built, and of the owners of estates in the neighbourhood, who often carried on some trade in the town, and practically governed it by means of the guild. The artisans and craftsmen were thus liable to oppression ; they therefore combined, and formed craft guilds for the protection of their interests. Long and fierce was the struggle between these rival bodies ; the victory finally rested with the popular party, which, in London, attained its supremacy as early as the reign of Edward II.

The Livery Companies of London were of a nature similar to the guilds which we have described. Many of them can trace their pedigree to Saxon times. In Norman times we find them possessed of property and managing their own estates by their own duly appointed officials. They were of a distinctly religious character, and prescribed rules for the attendance of the members at the services of the Church, for pilgrimages, and the celebration of masses for the dead. They had periodical feasts, and relieved the poor members of their fraternity. They possessed halls, and previous to the Great Fire, which swept away so many of the interesting features of Old London, these were built on a scale of great magnificence. The old Guildhall of London gives some idea of the ancient appearance of these buildings. Edward III. and Richard II. granted them Charters in return for large sums of money advanced to the national exchequer by the Companies. The preamble to the Charters thus granted shows that to maintain the poor members of their Companies was one of their chief objects. The Mercers' Charter begins as follows : "In consideration that several men of the mystery of mercery of the City of London often, by misfortunes of the sea and other unfortunate casualties, have become so impoverished and destitute that they have little or nothing in consequence to subsist on unless from the alms and assistance of the faithful." The Fishmongers' Charter also contains a grant of power to hold land "for the sustentation of the poor men and women of the said com- monalty" ; and the Goldsmiths' Charter recites that "many persons of that

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trade, by fire and the smoke of quicksilver, had lost their sight, and that others of them, by working in that trade, became so crazed and infirm that they were disabled to subsist but of relief from others, and that divers of the said City, compassionating the condition of such, were disposed to give and grant divers tenements and rents in the said City to the value of twenty pounds per annum to the Company of the said craft towards the maintenance of the said blind, weak, and infirm." Legacies were also bequeathed to the Companies for the same object, and thus we find them in the fourteenth century administering large charities for the benefit of the poor of London, and, with the help of the monasteries, providing a system of relief and educational organisation in the absence of any poor-law administration or State education.

After their incorporation by Edward III. and Richard II., the City Companies attained a high degree of importance and magnificence. The highest personages in Church and State were eager to be enrolled as members, and, favoured by royal edicts, they received many privileges and monopolies. It must not be supposed that all the members of each Company were engaged in the trade from which it received its name. The privilege of becoming freemen was granted by patrimony from very early times, so that the sons of a mercer were members of the Mercers' Company, although they did not follow their father's occupation.

The members at this period began to assume a distinctive dress or livery, and hence their associations came to be called the Livery Companies. This costume varied at different times. Sometimes the brethren were resplendent in "one livery of red and white, with the connuzances of their mysteries embroidered on their sleeves." Sometimes "scarlet and green," as in A.D. 1414, "scarlet and black" in A.D. 1418, "murrey and plunket," "a darkly-red," or "a kind of blue" were the prevailing fashions. But these were only for ordinary occasions; at special festivals, on the coronation of a sovereign or at some other State function, the Companies shone in splendour with "blew gowns and red hoods," or "brown-blew with broaderyd sleeveys," or "red, with hoods red and white." The effect of

## INTRODUCTION

such vivid colours must have been very striking, and brilliant must have been the scene when the brethren, clad in their new liveries, marched in procession through the streets to attend the services of the Church, or when, in their festal halls, they entertained nobles and princes, and the mighty “baron” made the table groan, and “frumentie with venyson,” brawn, fat swan, boar, conger, sea-hog, and other delicacies crowned the feast, while the merry music of the minstrels or the performance of the players delighted the gay throng. Much might be written of the ancient glories and civic state of the Livery Companies, of their grand triumphs and pageants, their magnificent shows and gorgeous ceremonies. We will mention two occasions when the Companies expressed the loyalty of the city by their imposing spectacles. When Henry V. returned from his victorious campaign in France, he was met at Blackheath by the Mayor and brethren of the City Companies, wearing red gowns, with hoods of red and white, “well mounted and gorgeously horsed, with rich collars and great chains, rejoicing at his victorious returne.” The river, too, was often the scene of their splendour, as when Elizabeth, the wife of Henry VII., was crowned. At her coming forth from Greenwich by water “there was attending upon her there the maior, shrifes, and aldermen of the citie, and divers and many worshipfull comoners, chosen out of every crafte, in their liveries, in barges freshly furnished with banners and streamers of silke, rechly beaton with the arms and bagges of their craftes; and in especiall a barge, called the bachelors’ barge, garnished and appareleed, passing all other, wherein was ordeyned a great redd dragon, spowting flames of fyre into the Thames; and many other gentlemanlie pagiaunts, well and curiously devised, to do Her Highness sport and pleasure with.”

The Companies were at the height of their prosperity in the fifteenth century. After their incorporation certain monopolies were assigned to them. It is erroneous to suppose that they were usually engaged in trading; they continued to be voluntary associations of persons, many of whom were engaged in trade, but the Company itself seldom traded. The merchants met together daily to “drink their guild” in their Company’s

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Hall, which was practically an exchange, and to transact their business. The Court of the Company had great power ; in addition to the management of the large charitable schemes, the regulation of the industry was assigned to it. No one was allowed to trade unless he was a member of the Company. He must only ply his trade in the particular part of the city where that industry was carried on. The quality of his goods must satisfy the requirements of the Court, and also the wages he paid to his servants and apprentices. The price of commodities was fixed by the Court, and not left to the regulation of the law of supply and demand, as it is now.

The Guildhall is the centre of the Municipality of London. There is held the "Common Hall," which is composed of the liverymen of the Companies, who are also freemen of the City. They propose two names to the Court of Aldermen, one of whom the Court selects as Lord Mayor. The connection of the Companies with the Municipality is somewhat curious, and in tracing the history of the relationship we are carried back to the early times when, instead of having wards as divisions of the Municipality, the Companies were the electors to the Courts of Aldermen and Common Council of the City. This probably arose from the fact that at an early period the various tradesmen lived in their own special part of the city ; the ironmongers lived in Ironmongers' Lane, the goldsmiths in Cornhill, the merchant taylors in Birch Lane.

In course of time the foreigners, *i.e.*, those who were not members of the Companies, gave a great amount of trouble to the brethren. They settled themselves outside the walls of the City, and, being unfettered by any restrictions, were able to undersell the tradesfolk in the City, and interfered greatly with their business. This enraged the citizens, who thirsted for revenge. The crisis was reached in the year A.D. 1517, when they took advantage of the usual May Day festivities, and turned the usual joyous pastimes into a violent insurrection against foreigners. They secured the help of a preacher named Dr Bell, who preached a spital sermon in Easter week, and inflamed the minds of the people by his representation of the evils wrought by the "foreigners," who ate their

## INTRODUCTION

bread and devoured their commerce. The result of this sermon was continued rioting and tumults, which terminated in a ferocious attack on the "foreigners" on May Day. Crowds had assembled to take part in the usual games, but the apprentices, watermen, and servants of the merchants began to insult the obnoxious "strangers" who did not belong to the guild, and plundered and destroyed their houses and warehouses. About 300 of the rioters were seized and sent to prison, but it does not appear that the poor foreigners received any compensation for their losses.

Great changes were in store for our City Companies. Trade extended itself more and more every year, and the power of the Companies to superintend and regulate it became obsolete and impracticable. The Reformation deprived them of all the estates which had been left for "superstitious" purposes, for celebrating masses for the dead, the maintenance of chantry chapels, etc.; and, as confiscation was at that period a favourite pastime, much plate and other valuables of the guilds throughout the country went to swell the heap of spoil. The Companies, however, bought back out of their own funds the estates and other property of which the State had deprived them. By right of purchase these possessions belong to the Companies, and it would be sheer spoliation to deprive them of that which they had bought with their own money. The Great Fire of London wrought wholesale devastation among the halls, almshouses, and house property of the Companies, and for a long period greatly crippled their resources. They raised large sums for the purpose of rebuilding their halls and other dwellings.

During the seventeenth century the financial condition of many of them was in a very low state, but at length they began to recover from their embarrassment. The great rise in the value of house property and land in the City of London during the last century increased their revenues enormously, and enabled them to carry on and enlarge their charitable and educational work, and to aid with their funds all the great public schemes. They are almost the sole survivors of the old guilds of England, and have never been interfered with by any legislative acts.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

Their legal position has been pronounced by the highest authorities to be unassailable, and it would be an act of injustice and wrong to interfere with and plunder these great institutions, which have conferred such vast benefits upon the nation of England.

Some of the Companies still perform some useful functions in connection with the trades whose names they bear. The Fishmongers' protect the public from having unsound fish sold in Billingsgate Market. The Goldsmiths' assay and mark plate, and prosecute persons who sell plate requiring to be marked which is below the standard in quality. The Apothecaries' protect the public from being served by unqualified persons, grant licenses to medical men, and give lectures and instruction in pharmacy. The Founders' Company protect us from false weights, and the Gunmakers' from defective gun-barrels ; while the Stationers' keep a register of copyright publications, and is the only Company which, in its corporate capacity, carries on a trade. It publishes books, chiefly almanacs. The following is a list of the Companies :—

### GREAT COMPANIES

Mercers.	Goldsmiths.	Salters.
Grocers.	Skinner's.	Ironmongers.
Drapers.	Merchant Taylors.	Vintners.
Fishmongers.	Haberdashers.	Clothworkers.

### MINOR COMPANIES

Apothecaries.	Cooks.	Framework Knitters.
Armourers.	Coopers.	Fruiterers.
Bakers.	Cordwainers.	Girdlers.
Barbers.	Curriers.	Glass-Sellers.
Basketmakers.	Cutlers.	Glaziers.
Blacksmiths.	Distillers.	Glovers.
Bowyers.	Dyers.	Gold and Silver Wyre
Brewers.	Fannmakers.	Drawers.
Broderers.	Farriers.	Gunmakers.
Butchers.	Feltmakers.	Horners.
Carpenters.	Fletchers.	Innholders.

## INTRODUCTION

### MINOR COMPANIES—*continued.*

Clockmakers.	Founders.	Joiners.
Leathersellers.	Playing-card makers.	Tinplate Workers.
Loriners.	Plumbers.	Turners.
Masons.	Poulters.	Tylers and Brick-layers.
Musicians.	Saddlers.	Upholders.
Needlemakers.	Scriveners.	Wax Chandlers.
Painters.	Shipwrights.	Weavers.
Pattenmakers.	Spectacle-makers.	Wheelwrights.
Pewters.	Stationers.	Woolmen.
Plaisterers.	Tallow Chandlers.	

There existed formerly several other Companies, but these have become extinct. Their titles were : Combmakers, Fishermen, Gardeners, Hat-band makers, Longbow String makers, Paviours, Pinmakers, Silk Weavers, Silk Throwers, Soapmakers, Tobacco-pipe makers and Wood-mongers. There are also the Carmen's Company, the Fellowship Porters, the Parish Clerks' Company, and the Company of Watermen and Lightermen ; but these are not entitled to the dignity of being "Livery Companies," and their history is therefore here disregarded.

*Income and Expenditure.*—The income of many of the Livery Companies is, as we have already stated, very considerable, and has therefore attracted the attention of a certain class of politicians, who are ever eager to attack great institutions when there is a prospect of plenteous spoil. But when men see how wisely and carefully the wealth of these Companies is administered, how numerous are the streams of charity which flow from this great fountain-head, how vast the extent of their good works, they would hesitate, even if they had the power, to disturb them and cripple their power of doing good.

The total income of the Companies was estimated in the Report of the Commission at £750,000, or £800,000, but this includes a large sum which can scarcely be termed income, viz., the annual value of such property as their halls, almshouses, schools, plate, furniture, and the interest of incurred debts. This certainly ought not to be included

## THE CITY COMPANIES

in any statement of the available income. It would be a fairer estimate if we were to deduct the annual value of this property from the above sum, and we can safely say that each year the Companies have at their disposal between £675,000, and £625,000.\* This income is of two kinds : (i.) *Corporate Income*, i.e., Income which is at the absolute disposal of the Corporation ; (ii.) *Trust Income*, i.e., income which the Companies are bound to apply to certain objects, in accordance with the wills of the founders, or Acts of Parliament, or the decrees of law courts or the Charity Commissioners. With regard to this Trust property they show themselves very beneficent trustees, as they are in the habit of expending large sums derived from their Corporate property for the benefit of their Trust funds. The amounts of the Corporate and Trust Incomes of the different Companies vary considerably. In some cases the Trust Income is very small ; † in others it is as much as one-third of the total Income. The total Trust Income of all the Companies is about £200,000.

They have estates or houses in all parts of England, but their chief property is in London, where they have some thousands of houses, built on land which is now extremely valuable. They have a large estate in Ireland, called the Ulster Plantation, which James I. induced or compelled them to acquire, at a cost of £60,000. By false representations and specious promises of Royal support they were led to suppose that this property would be a source of profit. In this they were greatly deceived. They found the place a desert ; they spent vast sums upon it, and by their munificence have made it one of the most prosperous parts of the United Kingdom.

We have formed an estimate of the income of the Companies ; we will now examine the other column of the balance-sheet, and see how this income is expended. We will take first the *Trust Income*, which amounts to £200,000, and is expended in the following manner :—

\* The Commissioners estimate the value of non-available income at £125,000.

† In the case of the Grocers' Company, the Trust Income is only £500, out of a total income of £38,000.

## INTRODUCTION

(1) In the support of almshouses. This accounts for £75,000. Most of the Companies have almshouses for the maintenance of their poor brethren, many of which are of very ancient foundation. Some of them are very large institutions, such as Whittington College, in Islington, maintained by the Mercers' Company; and St Peter's Hospital, at Wandsworth, maintained by the Fishmongers. In almost all cases the Companies have devoted, at various times, large sums out of their Corporate funds for the building, sustentation, and rebuilding of their almshouses. Altogether, the large number of 2500 persons are relieved by the bounty of the Companies.

(2) In support of education another £75,000 is expended. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge benefit largely from this fund. Several scholarships and exhibitions for poor scholars are thus maintained, supporting one hundred undergraduates, who owe their University training to the City Companies. The Arabic Professorship at Cambridge is also partly endowed by the Drapers' Company. In these cases the Corporate income is used often to supplement the Trust funds. Several schools of very high reputation owe their existence and maintenance to these same bodies of London citizens. St Paul's School, Merchant Taylors' School (being unendowed, it is supported entirely by the Company whose name it bears, out of the Corporate fund), Tonbridge School, Aldenham School, and Great Crosby School, provide education for over 2000 scholars. In addition, there are numerous middle-class schools, in different parts of England, which educate more than 10,000 children.

(3) In the support of general charities. These absorb £50,000 a year. Of this large sum, £9000 is applied to the support of primary schools, under the direction of clergymen of the Church of England; £5000 to the relief of poor blind folk; and £36,000 is expended in giving money, food, and clothing to the poor of London, and many other towns and rural parishes throughout England, in supporting lectureships in connection with the Church of England, hospitals, medical charities,

## THE CITY COMPANIES

and other beneficial institutions. Centuries ago legacies were bequeathed to the Companies for purposes which are now obsolete—such as the relief of inmates of debtors' prisons, who once excited the compassion of the charitable. But debtors' prisons, the miseries of which have been so graphically described by Dickens, are no more, and the funds are applied to other charitable uses. It would be a hard task to find any cause for complaint as to the way in which the Trust funds are administered, and the gratitude of many thousands is due to the noble conduct of the Companies, who have so ably carried out the intentions of generous founders.

The *Corporate Income* amounts to about £425,000 (after deducting the annual value of property not producing income\*). It must be remembered that this is the absolute property of the various Corporations. The Lord Chancellor of England stated that the Companies were at law absolute and perfect masters of their corporate property, and he declined to contemplate any redistribution of the Companies' corporate incomes by the State. Nevertheless, we shall see how judiciously they administer this private income for the public good, and no less than £150,000 of this is spent upon benevolent and charitable objects. Of this sum about £10,000 is given in the relief of poor members of the Companies; £50,000 in education, giving exhibitions to "poor scholars" at Oxford and Cambridge, and supporting schools. Nor are the Companies ever "behind the age" in administering their wealth; new schemes, when based on a sure foundation, find in them zealous helpers and supporters. The higher education of women has commended itself to them, in order that those who intend to take up teaching as a profession may be duly qualified and perfectly trained. Hence the Companies have given exhibitions to the ladies' colleges, Girton and Newnham. Technical education is another want of the age, in order that our workmen may be well skilled and trained, and able to hold their own with the craftsmen of other countries. This the Companies have determined to promote, and are making strenuous efforts to provide technical education for the workmen of

\* Halls, almshouses, schools, plate, furniture, etc.

## INTRODUCTION

England. The Clothworkers' Company has helped considerably in promoting the establishment of Yorkshire College at Leeds, where instruction is given in the manufacture of woollen goods, and of similar institutions at Bradford, Huddersfield and other places. They are engaged also in a still more extensive undertaking, and have formed the "City and Guilds of London Institute for the Advancement of Technical Education." This grand institution owes its origin to the Companies. £100,000 has been contributed to the building fund, and annual subscriptions raised to the amount of £25,000. Another £90,000 is spent in charitable objects of a general and public character. It is of great advantage to the well-being of the community that there should be either private or public bodies capable of bestowing large sums for the furtherance of new schemes and noble objects. This the Companies are able and willing to do, and few charitable institutions have not benefited largely by their liberality. Recognising their responsibilities with regard to their Irish estates, they have contributed largely to the support of the churches, schools, dispensaries, and other charities, both religious and secular, in Ulster, and subsidised new railways by grants of land and loans. Wherever they possess lands they have always supported the religious and secular charities connected with their estates. In London they contribute annually about £80,000 to such objects, and during ten years one hospital alone has received as much as £26,500 from one single company, in addition to the large sums given to other hospitals and dispensaries. The Bishop of London's Fund for carrying on the Church's work in the East-End of London, the building and endowing of new churches in all parts of London, orphanages, refuges, funds for the relief of distress, poor-boxes at the metropolitan police courts, always receive large and generous support from these munificent corporations. And in times of national distress, when England appeals to all her sons for aid, the City Companies of London lag not behind. During the South African War they contributed largely to the equipment of the City Imperial Volunteer Corps, and to the War Funds.

In order to carry on these vast schemes of charity organisation a large

## THE CITY COMPANIES

staff is needed. Sixty thousand pounds is spent annually on the salaries of the officers and servants of the Companies, and about £40,000 goes to the members of the governing bodies as Court fees. The business of the Courts is often very large and complex, involving much labour; and the remuneration which the members receive is small in comparison with the time they devote to their arduous duties. About £75,000 is spent yearly in rates and taxes, and in the rebuilding, repairs, and improvement of their property. The sum of £100,000 is devoted to entertainment. The Companies assist in dispensing the hospitality of the city when any strangers of distinction come to England, and often entertain at their banquets royal guests, learned men, and others, who have conferred benefits upon the community and distinguished themselves by their illustrious achievements. Some of the funds which they administer have been bequeathed to the Companies for this purpose; and they are only carrying out the intentions of the founders of the bequests, and maintaining the traditions of the hospitality for which England was ever famous, and giving opportunities for forming and cementing friendships, in their banquets for the Court or for the Livery.

From this brief survey of the history, income and expenditure of the Livery Companies of London we gather that these institutions continue to carry on the traditions which have been handed down to them from a remote past. Their ancient rules and regulations were such as to inculcate respect for the law, commercial honesty, and a high standard of conduct, together with kindness and consideration for their brethren and sisters and for the poor. The spirit of these rules is not obsolete. At the time of the Reformation they were despoiled; during the Great Fire most of them lost their halls, almshouses, plate and property; the Ulster Scheme robbed them of their wealth, and exactions and forced loans crippled their resources; but they have triumphed over all their difficulties, and remain to carry on their good works and to benefit the nation and people of England by the wise administration of their charities and the generous employment of their great wealth.

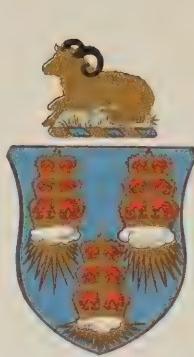




MERCERS.



GROCERS.



DRAPERS.



FISHMONGERS.



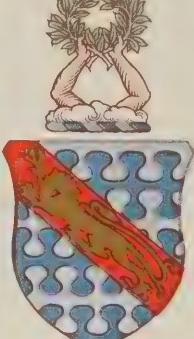
GOLDSMITHS.



SKINNERS.



MERCHANT TAYLORS.



HABERDASHERS.



SALTERS.



IRONMONGERS.



VINTNERS.

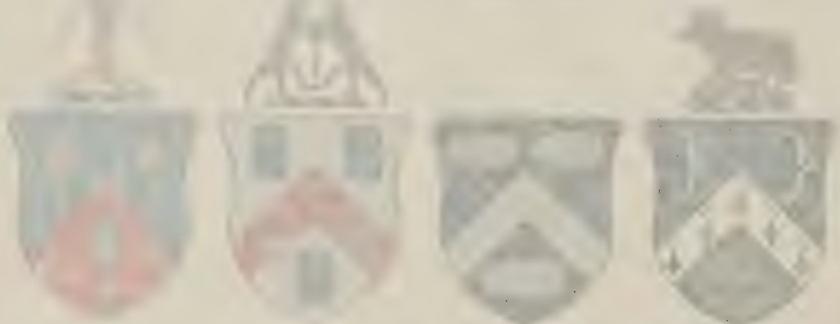


CLOTHWORKERS.

PART I  
THEIR AT COMPANIE



CLOTHMEN - TAILORS - MERCHANT HABDOASHERS  
TAYLORS



BALTERS - IRONMONGERS - VINTNERS - CLOTHWORKERS

PART I  
THE GREAT COMPANIES



# THE GREAT COMPANIES

## I

### THE MERCERS' COMPANY

*History of the Company.*—When Thomas Fuller wrote his *Church History* he dedicated a portion of his work to the Mercers' Company in these words :—

“To the Masters, Wardens, and all the members of the Honourable Company of Mercers of London: As it would be a sin of omission in me (so much obliged to your Society) should no share of my *History* be allowed unto you; so I should commit a great incongruity if assigning anywhere else than in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, whose great grandfather, Sir Godfrey Boleyn, in 1458 Lord Mayor of London, is generally believed one of your Company; so that the crowned maiden's head in your Arms may, in some sort, seem prophetical, presaging such a queen-virgin should be extracted from your Society as the Christian world could not parallel in all particulars. Indeed, much credit is imported in your very name. For seeing all buyers and sellers are ‘mercers’ *a mercando*, custom hath confined and fixed the term eminently on your Corporation, as always the prime chapmen of our nation, in which respect you have precedencey of all other Companies. I will detain you no longer from better customers, wishing you sound wares, quick vent, good prices, sure payment; one commodity alone excepted, I mean the truth itself. This buy and sell it not—Prov. xxiii. 23—purchase it on any terms, but part with it on no conditions.”

We gather from this quaint dedication that in the time of Fuller the Mercers held the first place in the ranks of the Livery Companies, and on

## THE CITY COMPANIES

account of the many illustrious names which appear upon its roll of members, the important trusts which have been assigned to its care, its munificence and princely gifts bestowed upon the sovereigns of England in support of the services of the State, as well as its generous aid to charitable institutions, the Mercers' Company is well worthy of its high position of dignity. It commenced its corporate existence in the form of a fraternity at least as early as the reign of Henry II., for Gilbert à Becket, the father of the famous Archbishop of Canterbury, was a mercer, and had a shop on the site of a part of the present Hall. The sister of St Thomas, Agnes de Helles, and her husband founded the Hospital of St Thomas of Acon on the same spot, and appointed the brotherhood patrons of the Hospital. Until the Reformation, when the Hospital shared the fate of similar institutions and was dissolved, it was closely connected with the Company. The two first Mayors of London, Henry and Roger FitzAlwyn (1210-14), are claimed as members of this Company, and about the same time it began to assume its present form. A branch of this ancient stem was the Company of Merchant Adventurers, who established themselves at Antwerp, and with whom the Mercers remained closely connected until the time of the Great Fire of London. The Charter of the Company was granted by Edward I. in 1296 and its motto, "*Dieu nous donne bonne adventure,*" has been adopted in spirit by many members of the Company in old as in recent times. A relic of the connection between the two companies is preserved in the Master's hammer, which bears the Tudor Arms and those of the Merchant Adventurers and the Maidenhead of the Mercers.

The name Mercer is derived from the Latin *mercator*, a merchant. He was no simple pedlar, or small tradesman, but a merchant who dealt in a varied assortment of goods, such as linen cloths, buckrams, fustians, satins, jewels, fine woollen and other English cloths, drugs, cotton, thread and wool, silk, wood, oil, copper, wine, lead, and salt. In the year 1347 the Company was recognised, when a code of rules was drawn at an assembly of "All the good people of the mercery of London."

For the cherishing of unity, and for the common profit of the mystery,

## THE MERCERS' COMPANY

it was agreed that four Masters should be chosen annually for the rule and governance of the brotherhood. Rules for the payment by members and apprentices were framed; no one who had carried packs through the country could be received as an apprentice; an annual dinner was arranged, and if any of the mystery should be undeservedly reduced to poverty by adventure at sea, debtors, or feebleness of body, he should be relieved by the alms of the mystery. It appears from these ordinances that the fraternity was an association of traders, that it was even then an important body, and both in numbers and income exceeded the other Companies of London. But a still higher destiny was in store for the Mercers. In the reign of Richard II. (A.D. 1393) the Company received its first Charter, by which the King, after stating that many men of the mystery did frequently by misfortune at sea and other unforeseen casualties, fall into so great poverty and want as to leave little or nothing whereon to support themselves, unless through the bounty of others, faithful in Christ, pitying and assisting them from a motive of charity, and that on that account the men of the said mystery had a wish and intentions of constituting some certain provision of 100 marks paid into the hanaper, granted for himself and his heirs to his said liege subjects, that they should be of themselves one perpetual community, and that the said community might every year elect and make four wardens to supervise, rule, and govern the said community; and give license to them to hold lands, etc., for the support of poor men of the community, and for the maintenance of a chaplain to pray for the souls of the King and Queen and of the members of mystery, etc. This was the first Charter, which was renewed by many of the succeeding sovereigns of England.

Sir Richard Whittington, of famous memory, appointed the Mercers as trustees of some of the munificent charities which he bequeathed. The charge of Whittington College and Almshouses was not the least important of the duties entrusted to the Company, and was the forerunner of the magnificent charities of Dean Colet, Sir Thomas Gresham, the Earl of Northampton, and others.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

I have already alluded to the disputes which arose in the fifteenth century between the traders and craftsmen of London and the foreigners; in these quarrels the Mercers took a leading part, and in consequence of some "hurlings," or fights, one Cauntelowe was imprisoned at Dudley Castle, and several mercers were confined at Windsor. In the fifteenth century the business of the Company increased so much that it was found necessary to form a court of assistants, composed of twelve "sad and discreet" persons, in order to carry on its affairs.

In the course of the history of the Company we notice the very large sums which were advanced from time to time to the Royal Exchequer for the support of the State or for the purposes of defence or war. In 1467 the Company advanced 560 marks for the defence of the sea, and was allowed the privilege of free export and import. In 1488, out of £4000 borrowed by the King for the French war, the Mercers contributed one-fifth of the whole sum, besides £170 towards the defence of Calais. In 1522 they lent King Henry VIII. one-sixth of £20,000, which he demanded from the City for the French wars. Again, he required £21,000 for his war with Scotland. Philip and Mary demanded £100,000 for the war with France, and these forced loans were continued by succeeding sovereigns, of which the Mercers always had to bear their share. £4000 was lent to Queen Elizabeth after the Spanish Armada by the Mercers alone, and when they were required in 1620 to subscribe a large sum for the defence of the Palatinate they were obliged to sell their plate in order to raise the money. The famous Petition of Right put an end to these forced loans, but previous to it Charles I. extracted £3720 from the Mercers out of the loan of £120,000 advanced by the Corporation of London, and the Civil War made fresh demands upon the funds of the Company.

In the meantime a great blow had fallen upon the Companies. When the Act for the Dissolution of Colleges, Chantries, and Free Chapels (37 Henry VIII. c. 4) was passed, the Companies were required to make a return of all the chantries, chapels, colleges, fraternities, guilds, etc.,



ENTRANCE COLONNADE AND SITE OF ANCIENT CLOISTER.  
THE HALL OF THE MERCERS' COMPANY



## THE MERCERS' COMPANY

connected with them, their jewels, goods, ornaments, etc., which were all confiscated to the King, and were bought back by the Companies. The Mercers paid nearly £4000 to buy back the property of which they had been despoiled.

The constant demands of the State upon the wealth of the Company impoverished it exceedingly. Trade also declined, and the Mercers passed an order that everyone should sell as cheaply as possible, although to their loss, as the time was come when every man was glad to lose, because no remedy was to be had. The Great Fire of London destroyed the hall and all the buildings of the Mercers in the City, but in spite of this terrible disaster they contributed half the cost of rebuilding the Royal Exchange, which amounted to £65,979. The establishment of the Irish Plantation was another drain upon the resources of the Company. Gifts and trusts were presented to them from time to time, but in 1699 their debts amounted to £60,000. Certain high-handed proceedings of James II. increased their troubles, and a scheme for the relief of widows of the clergy, commenced by Dr Ashton, rector of Beckenham, whereby the Mercers hoped to benefit both the subscribers and themselves, ended in disaster to both.

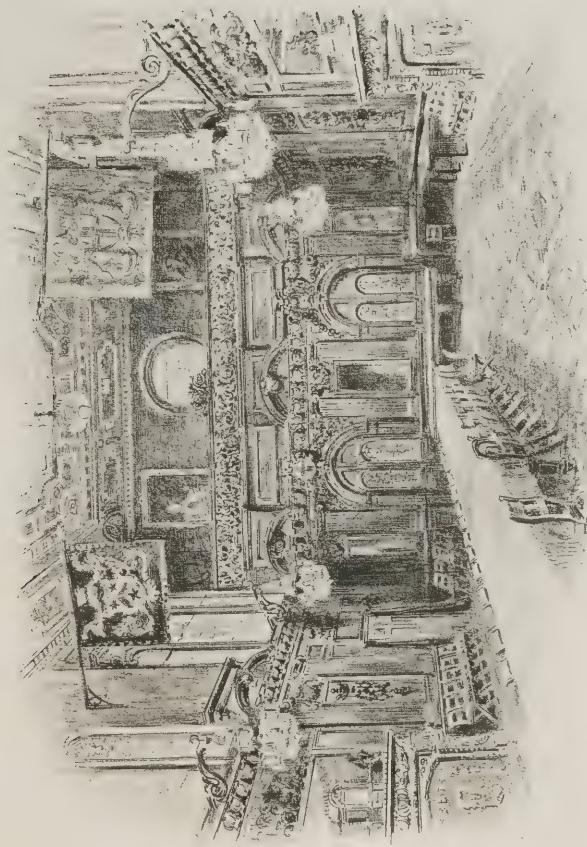
At length they found themselves in a hopeless state of insolvency, and were obliged to suspend payment. Great distress followed. Parliament was petitioned for help in 1745. They showed that their embarrassments had been brought about by their advances for the public service "in the troublesome times," and that few of their loans had been repaid. Parliament, in return for these services, granted them for a period of years an annual sum of £3000 out of the coal dues of the City of London.

From that period of disaster their recovery has been rapid, and at the beginning of the last century prosperity dawned once more. The estates of the Company in London have gradually increased in value, and with increased wealth a larger sphere of benevolence and good works was opened out to them. The Mercers and the Corporation of London

## THE CITY COMPANIES

rebuilt the Royal Exchange when again it was destroyed by fire, and we shall mention the varied schemes which find in them such munificent supporters. The history of the Mercers has been a chequered one, but it shows the energy, determination and perseverance characteristic of the English race. Bravely did they face the troubles which threatened to overwhelm them, and all right-minded people will rejoice that they so successfully weathered the storm that burst upon them in the eighteenth century, and have lived on to remind us of the past glories of our civic life, and to confer vast benefits on the people of our own age and country.

*The Hall and Treasures.*—The hall and buildings of the Mercers' Company occupy the site of the ancient Hospital of St Thomas of Acon, and near the Cheapside entrance once stood the house of Gilbert Becket, father of the great Archbishop, who went to the Crusades, was rescued by the fair Saracen maiden, and, being followed by her to London, made her his wife. This hospital was originally one of the houses of the military knights of St Thomas of Acon, a small body of men who formed themselves into a semi-religious order on the model of the Templars. They wore a mantle with a red and white cross on it. This house, as I have said, was founded by Thomas Fitz Theobald de Helles and Agnes his wife, sister to Thomas à Becket, in 1190. Although the order was closely connected with the Knights Templars, it survived when the latter was suppressed, and the hospital of St Thomas of Acon, until it was dissolved at the Reformation, was closely connected with the Company. Before the Mercers were incorporated they were made patrons of the hospital. The church was a stately edifice. Sir John Watney, the clerk and historian of the Company, writes, that "in it our ancestors worshipped, and in its immediate vicinity they have held their feasts and dispensed their charity for nearly 700 years. In it, too, they were buried, and for many centuries their good deeds have been held in remembrance by their successors, animated by the same devotion to their God, the same loyalty to their sovereign, and the same love and care for their brethren."



*The Hall of the Habsburg Company.*



## THE MERCERS' COMPANY

The hospital was the place of meeting of the Livery Companies on many solemn occasions. Here they assembled "arrayed in their respective suits," and marched in procession to the Church of St Paul to attend vespers or mass, and until the Reformation it played an important part in the civic life of the citizens. Before the incorporation of the Mercers they used to meet in the hall, and worship in the church of the hospital, and early in the 15th century purchased part of the church for their chapel and a room for their own use. They richly furnished their new chapel. This chamber, purchased from the Master of the Hospital in 1413, was the first hall of the Company.

About the year 1517 they began to build a new hall and chapel, which faced Cheapside, and behind them still stood the courtyards, gardens, cloisters, chapter-house, churchyard, and church of St Thomas. This must have been a large and imposing building, consisting of nave, choir, and aisles, adorned with numerous monuments of illustrious noblemen and citizens.

In 1538, Henry VIII. and his Queen, Jane Seymour, stood in the Mercers' Hall, then newly built, and saw "the marching watch of the city most bravely set out by its founder, Sir John Allen, at that time Mayor, and one of his Privy Council." On the east of the hall, adjoining Old Jewry, stood St Mary Colechurch, named after "one Cole that built it," a small, curious church, ten feet higher than the street, under which were some arched vaults and cellars, used by the members of the Company.

When the hospital shared the fate of kindred institutions and was suppressed in 1538, the Mercers purchased the buildings. Sir Thomas Gresham, the founder of the college which bears his name, contributed largely to the purchase-money, and St Thomas's Church became the Mercers' Chapel. The cloister court and "divers houses within the precinct" were converted into various offices and apartments, and the old chapel, which was under the hall, was made into shops and "letten out for rent." The celebrated time-serving Antonio de Dominis, Archbishop of Spalatro,

## THE CITY COMPANIES

in the reign of James I., often preached in the Mercers' Chapel, and attracted the notable men of the day, who flocked to hear the new convert.

The Companies were required in the sixteenth century to lay in stores of corn to provide against dearth and scarcity. Each of the great Companies had a granary at Bridge House on the old London Bridge, but subsequently they built granaries attached to their halls. Later, they stored coals for the poor.

The Great Fire of London wrought devastation everywhere, and swept away all the buildings of the Mercers. Gresham College was alone spared, and there the Mercers found a home until, with their accustomed energy, they were able to rebuild their hall and other edifices. St Paul's School and Mercers' School were both finished in six years, and the hall was soon commenced, although the Company subscribed £65,979 to rebuild the Royal Exchange. Most of the present buildings date from this period. The rebuilding of the hall and chapel cost £11,881.

Entering the building at the entrance in Ironmonger Lane we see on the left a small court surrounded by offices, probably the site of the ancient cloister, which leads to the principal building. Before the chapel is a large ambulatory, from which a fine staircase leads to the hall and court-rooms. This ambulatory was formerly a burial-place, and now contains the monument of Sir Richard Fishborne, who was a great benefactor to the Company, and died in 1623. The stone staircase on the left is protected by a wooden portcullis. The hall on the first floor is supported by Doric columns, and is a very handsome and lofty apartment, wainscoted and richly ornamented. There are also a large elegantly-furnished drawing-room and several court-rooms.

The most interesting of the paintings are:—an original portrait of Sir Thomas Gresham, by Holbein, a fanciful portrait of Sir Richard Whittington with his famous cat—the story of his cat probably arose from the name of his ship, called *The Cat*, which enriched the merchant by its successful voyages; Dean Colet, the Founder of St Paul's School; Sir



#### THE WAGGON AND TUN

Given to the Mercers' Company by William Burde during his Wardenship in 1573. The Waggon weighs 64 ozs., is silver gilt, and moved along the table by clockwork.



## THE MERCERS' COMPANY

Lionel Duckett, Lord Selborne, Thomas Papillon, master in 1698; Rowland Wynne, who gave £400 towards wainscoting the hall after the Great Fire.

Additional interest is added to the Mercers' Hall, as it was the place where the Council of Trade, now the Board of Trade, first met in 1660; and in which the Bank of England (1694) and the East India Company (1698) held their first meetings.

The Company have much valuable plate, though it has lost much through force of circumstances. Forced loans, the great losses resulting from the Fire, and other causes, have obliged them at various times to sell their valuables. But their store has been richly replenished. Of the plate in use before the Great Fire four pieces remain:—a gilt salt of Sir John Dethick (1638), three gilt beakers of John Bancks (1604-5), a curious waggon and tun, the gift of W. Baude (1573), and the magnificent Leigh Cup, the gift of Sir Thomas Leigh (date mark 1499-1500, presented in 1554), which has the inscription—

“To elect the Master of the Mercerie hither am I sent,  
And by Sir Thomas Leigh for the same intent.”

Among their more recent acquisitions may be mentioned William Hurt's loving cup (1673), two loving cups presented by the Bank of England in 1694 as an acknowledgement of the use of the hall when the Bank was first started, two flagons given in 1702 by the East India Company for use of the hall, two monteiths with lion handles given by W. Sydenham in 1699, and a massive loving cup and two salts belonging to Trinity Hospital, Greenwich, which is under their management.

In ancient days of pomp and splendour the pageants and processions of the Mercers were of a very gorgeous description. Their livery robes were faced with satin; the gentlemen ushers had velvet coats with a chain of gold about their shoulders. Gowns and scarlet satin hoods distinguished the bachelors, others wore plush coats, while trumpeters, splendidly dressed, drummers and fifemen, the pensioners with red gowns,

## THE CITY COMPANIES

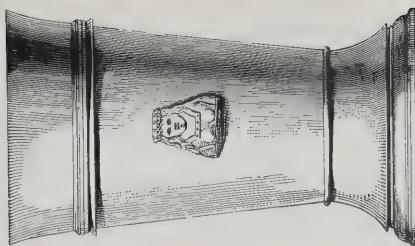
and a number of the Artillery Company completed the procession. One of the pageants was a rock of coral with seaweeds, with Neptune, mounted on a dolphin at the summit, on a throne of mother-of-pearl, and accompanied by tritons, mermaids, and other marine attendants.

Another pageant was a triumphal chariot, adorned with a variety of paintings, enriched with gold and silver and rare jewels, and figures bearing the banners of kings and mayors and the Companies, with the arms of the founder, Richard II. A virgin (the arms of the Company) sat upon a high throne, dressed in a robe of white satin, decked with gold and jewels; her long, dishevelled, flaxen hair was adorned with pearls and gems, and crowned with a rich coronet of gold and jewels. Her buskins were of gold, laced with scarlet ribbons, and she bore a sceptre and a shield with the arms of the Mercers. Her attendants were Fame blowing her trumpet, Vigilance, Wisdom, and other personified virtues, and the nine Muses, while eight pages of honour walked on foot, and Triumph acted as charioteer. Nine white Flanders horses drew the huge machine, each horse being mounted by some emblematical figure, such as Asia, America, Victory, etc. Grooms and Roman lictors in crimson garb, and twenty savages or "green men," throwing squibs and fireworks, completed the pageant.

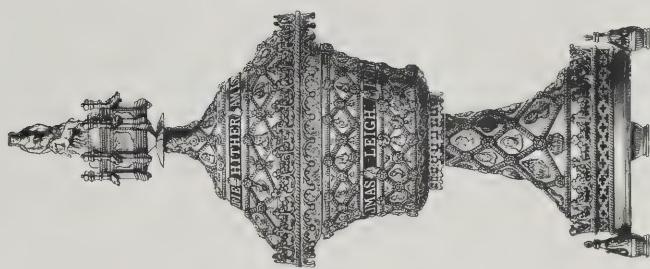
On the river, too, the scene was equally animated, for there the stately barges, echoing with flutes and trumpets, adorned with streamers, flags, and banners, passed along, and were saluted by the crowds in the pleasure boats and by their Majesties at Whitehall (1687).

To those who live in our crowded, overgrown, smoky London it is pleasant to recall in imagination the scenes which once took place in our city streets, to watch the pageants pass, and to witness the amusements of a contented and happy people in the days when England's life was young.

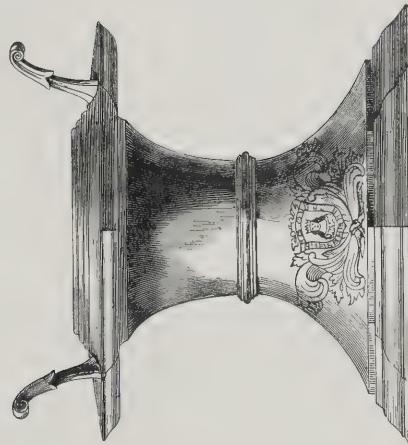
*Income, Charities and Expenditure.*—We have now to record the more substantial services which the Mercers confer upon the nation. The accounts of the Company and the record of their good deeds occupy 108



BEAKER CUP, 1604  
At Mercers' Hall



LEIGH CUP, 1499-1500  
At Mercers' Hall



OCTAGONAL SALT, 1685  
At Mercers' Hall



## THE MERCERS' COMPANY

closely-printed pages of the Report of the Royal Commission, therefore we can only give a very condensed record of the numerous charities which the Mercers so ably administer, and of their various eleemosynary and educational schemes for the benefit of the people of England.

The whole income of the Company, according to the Report of the Royal Commission, is estimated at £83,000 ; of this sum the corporate income amounts to £48,000, and their Trust funds are valued at £35,000. One of the earliest charities entrusted to the care of the Mercers was that of Sir Richard Whittington, of famous memory. In his will he directed that all his houses and tenements in London should be sold, and the proceeds distributed in various charitable works. His executors founded a College of Priests, called Whittington College, which was suppressed at the Reformation, and the almshouse adjoining the old church of St Michael Paternoster, for thirteen poor folk, of whom one should be principal or tutor. In choosing candidates for admission, preference was to be given to "poor, feeble men of the craft of the mercerie." The almshouses were consumed in the Fire of London, and afterwards rebuilt on the same site ; but in 1835, the buildings having fallen into decay, the Company re-erected the almshouses, now called Whittington College, at Islington, providing accommodation for twenty-eight women. A fund for out-pensions was subsequently created.

One of the most important benefactions entrusted to the care of the Company was St Paul's School, founded by Dr John Colet, Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, in 1508, and finished in 1512. It was situated at the east end of St Paul's Churchyard, and several estates in London, Bucks, and elsewhere were conveyed by royal licence to the Mercers' Company for its maintenance. The boys were to be instructed in good manners and literature, and presided over by one master and one usher. This master, according to the book of ordinances made by Dean Colet for the management of the school, shall be "a man whole in body, honest and virtuous, and learned in good and clean Latin literature, and also in

## THE CITY COMPANIES

Greek, if such may be gotten, a wedded man, a single man, or a priest that hath no benefice that may let his due business in the school." His salary was fixed "at one mark a week, and a livery gown of four nobles delivered in cloth." A chaplain was also appointed to sing mass daily in the chapel, and "pray for the children to prosper in good life and good literature to the honour of God and our Lord Jesus Christ." He was ordered to teach the children the Catechism, and the Instructions of the Articles of the Faith, and the Ten Commandments in English. The children might be chosen from any nation or country, and, according to the number of seats, were not to exceed in number 153. The student of ancient customs finds much that is interesting in these ordinances. Every Childermas Day the children were to attend at St Paul's Church, and hear the Child-Bishop's sermon. The good Dean declares, "I will they use no cock-fighting, nor riding about of victory, nor disputing at Saint Bartilmew's, which is but foolish babling and loss of time." As regards the subjects taught in the school, he says that "it passeth his wit to devise and determine in particular," but they were to learn good literature, both Latin and Greek, and "all filthiness, and all such abuse which the late blind world brought in which more rather may be called blotterature than literature, I utterly banish and exclude out of the school." His object in founding the school was to increase the knowledge and worship of God and our Lord Christ Jesus, and the Christian life and manners of the children.

St Paul's School with all its city property was destroyed in the Fire of London, and afterwards rebuilt. It has been enriched by other benefactors, amongst whom were Viscount Campden, William Perry, and others who left money to found scholarships and exhibitions for poor scholars at the Universities. In 1818 the Mercers rebuilt the school at a cost of £23,000. In 1876 a new scheme was framed by the Endowed Schools Commissioners, whereby the management of the school was no longer entrusted solely to the Mercers' Company. The Governors purchased a site for a new school at Hammersmith, and the school



WHITTINGTON COLLEGE, HIGHGATE

(Mercers' Company)



## THE MERCERS' COMPANY

was removed there in 1888, where accommodation is provided for 700 boys, and a school for 400 girls has just been finished. A new governing body has been appointed for the management of the school, consisting of the Master and Wardens of the Court *ex officio*, nine members appointed by the Court of Assistants of the Company, and three by each of the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and London.

In following the history of this institution, and the careful guardianship which the Mercers have always exercised over it, we do not consider that anyone could differ from Dean Colet's opinion of the Mercers' Company, when he said, "In considering the assured truth and circumspect wisdom and faithful goodness of the most honest and substantial fellowship of the Mercery of London, to whom I have committed all the cure of the school, and trusting in their fidelity and love that they have to God and Man and to the School, and also believing verily that they shall always dread the great wrath of God."

Amongst the other educational institutions in connection with the Company is Mercers' School, one of the oldest schools in England. It is lineally descended from the old grammar school founded in the reign of Henry VI. in connection with the Hospital of St Thomas of Acon, and after the dissolution of that hospital was reconstituted, and provided free education for twenty-five boys in the chapel of the Company. Afterwards the school was held in a room beneath the chapel. When the great fire destroyed the buildings, the school was re-erected in the Old Jewry. It has migrated several times—to Budge Row, Red Lion Court, Watling Street, to a site near Whittington's house on College Hill, and was finally rebuilt in College Hill, Cannon Street, where the college of the famous Richard once stood.\* It provides a good middle-class education for 300 boys, and has done, and is doing, a very useful work.

Another school which has been fostered by the Company is a free school at Horsham in Sussex, founded by Richard Collier in 1532 for

\* Since removed to Barnard's Inn, Holborn.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

the benefit of the poor people of that parish. A similar school exists at West Lavington, Wilts, founded in 1542 by Alderman Dauntsey, together with some almshouses for ten almspeople. Here, too, the premises have been rebuilt; and the charity provides a comfortable asylum for "the beadmen and beadwomen of West Lavington" in their old age, and a good religious and agricultural training to the young people who attend the school.

Another great educational benefaction is that of Sir Thomas Gresham, who bequeathed property to the Corporation of London and to the Mercers for the purpose of endowing lectureships in divinity, astronomy, music, geometry, law, physic, and rhetoric. The lectures were to be delivered in the house of Sir Thomas in Bishopsgate Street, afterwards called Gresham College. He bequeathed to the Corporation and to the Mercers' Company his property of the Royal Exchange and his house, which was one of the few principal buildings of the city spared by the Fire. As we have already stated, the Royal Exchange was then destroyed, and it devolved upon the Mercers and the City to rebuild it at an expense of £66,000. Although the Gresham estate is an extremely valuable one, it has caused some heavy burdens to be laid upon its guardians, who, on account of the devastations caused by fire, were losers to the extent of £201,318 (Charity Commissioners' Report, A.D. 1818). The ill-fated Exchange was again destroyed in 1838, when again £63,000 was advanced by the Mercers. The present Gresham College was built in 1842, and contains a lecture theatre, a library, and room for the lectures. Each professor gives twelve lectures, and the courses begin each year in October. The Mercers have also shown themselves to be the patrons of learning by granting exhibitions and scholarships to poor scholars, thus enabling them to enjoy the advantages of University training.

In addition to the almshouses which we have already mentioned, there are Lady Mico's Almshouses at Stepney, founded in 1692, for ten poor widows of London, rebuilt by the Mercers in 1857; and Trinity Hospital at Greenwich, founded in 1615 by Henry Howard, Earl of

## THE MERCERS' COMPANY

Northampton. James I., by letters patent, granted that it should be a hospital for the relief of poor indigent men, to be called "The Hospital of the Holy and Undivided Trinity in East Greenwich, of the foundation of Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton," and should consist of a warden and twenty poor men, and that, for the better governing and well ordering of the said hospital, the Mercers' Company should for ever thereafter be the governors. The property of the hospital has increased greatly in value ; its accounts are kept quite separate from those of the Company, and the Charity Commissioners have devised a scheme for the advantageous use of the surplus revenues. A new hospital has been built at Shottesham for eight poor men ; grants made to other hospitals founded by the Earl at Castle Rising, Norfolk, and Clun, Shropshire ; pensions provided for thirty poor men ; and the remainder given to hospitals, convalescent homes, and other similar institutions.

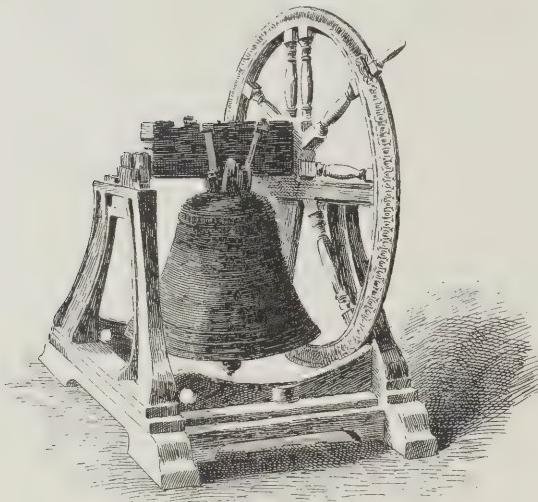
Various people have bequeathed money for the purpose of making grants to young freemen to help them in starting business, giving doles to poor persons of various parishes too numerous to mention, to poor widows of the Company, and other deserving people.

The application of charities bequeathed for purposes now obsolete has been wisely arranged. In olden days, when people were imprisoned for debt, and the abject condition, the squalor, vice, and misery of the prisoners of Marshalsea, King's Bench, Ludgate, Newgate, etc., used to excite the pity of the charitable, many bequests were left for their relief. And some persons suppose that, since imprisonment for debt is now abolished, all the money derived from these bequests is appropriated by the custodians for their own use. Nothing could be further from the truth. All the wealth yielded by these obsolete prison charities is amalgamated into one fund, and is administered by special trustees, of whom three are Mercers, for the purpose of making grants and donations to convalescent homes. Thus do they convert these ancient charities to the best modern uses, and promote the restoration to health of many a poor sufferer.

When we glance at the very numerous schemes of charity administered

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so ably by the Mercers' Company, we are impressed by the thought of the immense labour which the working of so vast a system of organisation must entail. It is only possible here to allude to some of the numerous good deeds which the Mercers accomplish, but enough has been said to show the immense benefit which they confer upon a large section of the community, and to convince us that the world would be indeed poorer if those who need were deprived of the aid the Company so willingly bestows.



BELL (CAST 1463) FROM ALL HALLOWS', STAINING, BELONGING  
TO THE GROCERS' COMPANY.

## II

## THE GROCERS' COMPANY

*History.*—The Grocers' Company, at one time the most powerful of all the great Companies, formerly occupied the first place in the order of precedence, and still maintains a high position of rank and dignity amongst its distinguished compeers. By the exertions and liberality of its members it still preserves its ancient character, well earned by centuries of good and useful work, of being “a nursery of charities and a seminary of good citizens.”

The history of the Company possesses many interesting features. It had its origin in the ancient Guild of Pepperers, of Soper's Lane, which was in existence in 1180 A.D., and was allied with the Spicers of the Cheap. These merchants carried on an important commerce with the East, and had dealings with the great traders of Florence, Siena, and Lucca. They practised the arts of coining and weighing, appointed the keeper of the King's Great Beam, by which all goods sold by the merchant's pound of fifteen ounces were weighed, and through their instrumentality the Lombard merchants found their way to England, and became the great bankers of the country.

In 1345 some Pepperers met together and founded a new brotherhood called the Fraternity of St Anthony, for the purpose of promoting “greater love and unity,” and in order “to maintain and assist one another.” The very interesting record of the foundation of this brotherhood is still preserved amongst the Companies' archives, in which the Grocers are especially rich; although the Great Fire destroyed the hall, it spared a tower in the garden, which fortunately contained all their records and muniments. The ordinances of the Fraternity show that its objects were *social*, *benevolent*, and *religious*, and begin as follows :—

## THE CITY COMPANIES

"To the honour of God, the Virgin Mary, St Anthony, and all Saints, the ninth day of May 1345, a Fraternity was founded of the Company of Pepperers, of Soper's Lane, for love and unity to maintain and keep themselves together, of which Fraternity are sundry beginners, founders, and donors to preserve the said Fraternity." (Here follow twenty-two names.) No person should belong if not of good condition and of this craft—that is to say, a Pepperer of Soper's Lane, or a Spicer in the ward of Cheap, or other person of their mystery, wherever they reside. A priest was to be maintained, an annual dinner arranged, rules for the attendance at church, the assistance of unfortunate members, almsgiving, etc., were prescribed. It must be noticed that the rule with regard to the exclusion of all who were not of the "craft" was never adhered to, and forty years later conditions were specified for the admission of such persons to the brotherhood.

In 1373 the name "Grocer" was first applied to the Company, the title probably signifying one who dealt *en gros*—wholesale, as opposed to retail merchandise. The Company speedily attained to a position of great importance, and exercised a most powerful influence in the municipal government of the City. One Nicholas Brembre, a leading member of the Company, seems to have conceived the bold plan for the entire usurpation of the rights of the citizens, and for the monopoly by the Grocers of the office of Mayor. The old Guildhall was "stuffed with men-of-arms over even, by ordinance and assent of Sir Nicholas Brembre, for to chose him Mayor on the morrow ; and so he was." It is curious that the records of these high-handed proceedings were removed from the Company's documents, as the members were not proud of the forcible part they had played ; and the ambitious Mayor was beheaded.

In 1394 one of their number was appointed Garbeller by the Corporation, *i.e.*, he was entrusted with the duty of garbling, or cleansing spices and other "sotill wares" ; and at length, in 1428, the first charter of their incorporation was granted to them by Henry VI., and is important in proving the object for which the Company was founded. The members





THE OLD HALL OF THE GROCERS' COMPANY

## THE GROCERS' COMPANY

were empowered to acquire and hold lands within the City of London and the suburbs thereof towards the support as well of the poor men of the said commonalty as of a chaplain to perform divine service. It will be observed that no mention is here made of any trade duties, qualification, or obligation. The Society was simply a social and religious institution. Subsequently certain trade regulations were entrusted to it. The custody and management of the King's Beam was assigned to the Grocers, and also the garbling of spices, etc.—*e.g.*, in 1541 we find that they ordered “bags and remnants of certain evil and naughty pepper to be conveyed over sea to be sold, and the dust or the evil pepper surnamed ginger to be burned”; but these trade powers did not form an essential part of the Incorporation, which continued to exist long after the trade powers had fallen into disuse. The Grocers shared with the other Companies the loss of a large portion of their property, which had been bequeathed for “superstitious” use, and this they bought back from the Crown. The Tudor and Stuart monarchs made their usual forcible demands for grants and loans, and the Grocers endeavoured to satisfy their exorbitant requests. They lent to Queen Mary £7555 in 1558, and similar sums to the Virgin Queen and James I., who compelled them to take a share in his Ulster scheme. Charles I. had £10,000 from the Grocers, the Parliament £9000, besides £4500 paid to the Lord Mayor “for the defence of the City in these dangerous times.” To raise the money they sold their plate, and each member was assessed heavily. Charles II. received about £3000.

Then came the Great Fire, which laid all their buildings in ruins, except the tower in the garden containing the archives; and the Company found itself involved in heavy pecuniary difficulties. They required £20,000 to enable them to support all the hospitals, almshouses, and charities which depended upon them for maintenance, and to restore the losses which the fire had caused. They vainly petitioned Parliament to assist them with a Bill for raising the money by assessment upon the members of the Company, and it was only by the liberal offer-

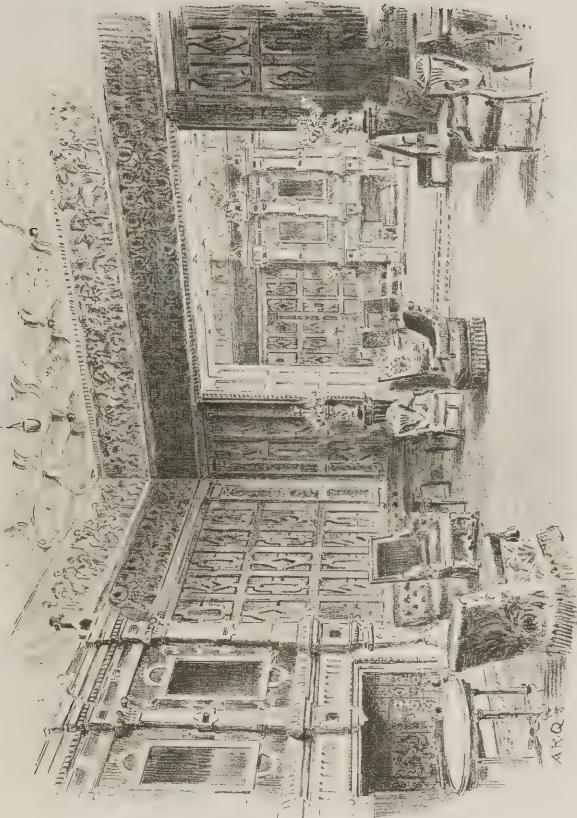
## THE CITY COMPANIES

ings of the members that they could meet the demands of the parishes for whose charities they were trustees. During this disastrous period of financial embarrassment the continuity of the Company was maintained, and its property saved from destruction, by the personal exertions and private liberality of its members.

The high-handed proceedings of Charles II., who issued a writ of *Quo warranto* against the City charters and liberties, added to their difficulties; but a few years later William III. wisely declared these proceedings to be illegal and arbitrary, and restored to the Companies their ancient state. He honoured the Grocers by holding the office of Master, and granted to them yearly three fat bucks from Enfield chase.

But debts and difficulties still beset the luckless Company, and in 1693 the annual dinner had to be abandoned in order to pay the workmen for repairing the hall. At this juncture the Bank of England became tenants of the hall, and thus enabled the Company to struggle through its difficulties. A composition of 6s. 8d. in the £1 was offered to all creditors, and at length, in 1721, all liabilities were discharged, and the Company's accounts presented a balance on the right side.

It does not appear that the Grocers' Company exercised any jurisdiction in trade after the Great Fire. At one time these powers were very extensive, and in 1447 were enlarged so as to comprise the whole kingdom, with the exception of the City liberties. The variety of goods which they were called upon to "garble" was very wide, and included all kinds of spices, drugs, medicines, oils, ointments, and plaasters; confectionery, syrups, and waters; pepper, ginger, cloves, mace, cinnamon, rosin, rhubarb, senna, turpentine, annis, ammonia, wormseed, wax, spike-nard, powders, green ginger, dates, almonds, canvas, alum, sugar, and oranges; and when the famous Sir Walter introduced the fragrant weed, called in the Oxford Statute Book *noxia herba nicotiana*, *Anglicè* tobacco, the Grocers were the purveyors of the weed so hateful to King James, and their Company was responsible for its freedom from adulteration. It will be observed that drugs and medicines are included in the above list,



*The Drawing Room of the Grocer's Company.*



## THE GROCERS' COMPANY

and the third Charter of the Company, A.D. 1607, included the Grocers and Apothecaries as one incorporate body. But in 1615 the Apothecaries petitioned the King for a separate incorporation, and two years later letters patent were granted to them, and the Apothecaries' Company began its existence.

Since the middle of last century the Grocers' Company has enjoyed well-earned prosperity. By their energy and public spirit they succeeded in restoring their credit ; they preserved their hall and property, and, by the improvement in the value of their estate, they were enabled to increase their charities, to administer their trusts with liberality, and to subscribe largely to objects of public interest, and for the advancement of religion, education, and charity.

On the site of their ancient hall, the Grocer's Company have recently erected their new buildings—a fine and imposing structure containing offices, hall, court and drawing-rooms. The increased value of the site, and the large rental which the new offices, facing Prince's Street, yield, have provided ample funds for the new structure.

It will be interesting to follow the history of the ancient hall of the Company, and to study the events associated with it. In its early days, the brotherhood of St Anthony was very migratory. At first, it met in the town house of the Abbot of Bury, in St Mary Axe ; then, in 1348, at the house of one Fulsham, called the Rynged Hall, near St Anthony's Church, in Budge Row, Watling Street ; then at the hotel of the Abbot of St Cross, whence they removed to Bucklersbury, at the Cornet's Tower, formerly used by Edward III. as his exchequer.

Then the Company purchased from Lord Fitzwalter the chapel of St Edmund in Old Jewry, and a few years later acquired the town house of that nobleman, which adjoined the chapel. In 1427 the foundation-stone of a new hall was laid, and it was completed in the following year. The building, when finished, consisted of a chapel, parlour and chamber, buttery, pantry, cellar, kitchen, a tower standing in the garden, a clerk's house, and a set of almshouses in the front yard for the Company's almsmen and

## THE CITY COMPANIES

women. The adornment and furniture of the hall were of a rude and rough description. The floor was covered with rushes, and was not boarded until 1631, when the Court, "taking into consideration the inconvenience and noisomeness of the rushes in the parlour, especially in the summer-time, and also how subject they were to the great danger of fire in the winter, had the same boarded and furnished with three dozen of chairs, being of the best Raushe (Russia) leather." In 1611 Sir Stephen Soame's offer to wainscot the hall was "thankfully and lovingly accepted" by the Court. The Company possessed a great store of arms, and employed an armourer to "byrnysh and dress all the harness." The garden, with its "alleys, arbour, hedgerows, and a bowling alley," was much frequented by the City folk, who were allowed to make use of it as a place for recreation.

The hall was often let to strangers for dinners and suppers, and for funerals, feasts, and weddings, and was often the scene of much social festivity. But grave and anxious were the faces of the men gathered round the tables when, during the Civil War period, the "Grand Committee of Safety" met in the Grocers' Hall to provide moneys for the army and control the affairs of the distracted kingdom. Here, too, Cromwell and Fairfax were entertained in great state, and presented with valuable plate. But loud were the rejoicings of the citizens when King Charles II. returned "to enjoy his own again," and the Grocers provided thirty riders to take part in the pageant.

As I have said, the Great Fire destroyed the hall, and the poverty of the Company prevented them from rebuilding it. Sir John Cutler, in 1668, came to the rescue, and built a new parlour and dining-room. On account of the financial difficulties of the Company, some of its creditors sought powers from Parliament to sell the hall in order to satisfy its debts. The hall was sequestered in 1672, and the Company ejected in 1679, which act aroused the spirit of the members. Money was borrowed to pay off the intruding creditors. Sir John Moore and others came forward with noble gifts in order to rebuild the hall, "all

## THE GROCERS' COMPANY

being fully convinced that if the hall should long continue under those circumstances, not only all that had been done would be wholly fruitless, but all that remained (for which they were trustees to the generations to come) would soon waste into nothing, which would reproachfully render the present members most ungrateful to their ancestors, whose names still blossom in what remains of those pious monuments of their charities, and obnoxious to those who should succeed happy members of this Society."

The restored hall was occupied by the Bank of England (1694-1734). A new hall was built in 1802, restored in 1827, and is now entirely replaced by the magnificent pile of buildings which has recently been completed.

The treasures of the Company consist chiefly of their muniments. At one time they possessed a vast store of plate; some of this was sold to enable them to meet the demands of Royalists or Roundheads, and the rest was melted in the Great Fire; as much as 200 ounces of metal was found amid the ruins of their hall, and sold for the benefit of the poor in those distressful times. Hence the Grocers have no old plate.

Amongst the worthies may be mentioned Sir Allan de la Zouche, Andrew Aubery, 1339, Sir Thomas Knollys, Sir Thomas Chicheley, Sir John Crosby, Charles II., Earl of Nottingham, William III., Sir Philip Sydney, General Monk, William Pitt, and other statesmen of fame and honour. One of the most brilliant scenes in the history of the Company occurred when King William III. attended the banquet on the occasion of his acceptance of the office of Master; and in the account of the proceedings, the following curious summary of the history of the Company is found :—

"Grocers' Hall was over the Mansion House of the Lord Fitzwalter, a peer of this realm, of whom the Company purchased the same in the reign of Henry VI., being situate in the centre of the city of London, and having a fair open garden behind for air and diversion; and before

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it, within the gate, a large courtyard for the reception of coaches, as the aldermen and sheriffs attend the Lord Mayor on public affairs, especially from Guildhall, and the Sessions at the Old Bailey ; or, as the nobility, and other persons of quality, shall either pay their visits, or be thither invited by his lordship. For these reasons the Company of Grocers, after the late dreadful fire, rebuilt and enlarged it with all offices and accommodations far beyond any other place that ever was, or now is, for the most commodious seat of the Chief Magistrate, as he is, for the time being, His Majesty's representative in this famous city, at the expense of many thousand pounds, as designing it for the encouragement of their members, and conveniency of the citizens resorting thither, as to the fountain of justice, from all parts of the City ; as it may also redound in the honour of the kingdom, being conspicuous in their transient view to ambassadors and foreigners, as well as natives of His Majesty's dominions, passing and repassing through this city.

" And as this Society may boast of its antiquity, deriving its original from merchants at Rome, trading in spices to Eastern parts, who from Rome transplanted themselves to this city, with the conquest of this island, and first gave wings to negotiation here, from whence this island hath been able to give law by sea to all the world ; so that it, above all other Companies in London, abounded in wealthy members, trading both at home and abroad, from whence have sprung many honourable families, being incorporated by the name of four wardens, as superintendents, without a master, and so most capable of adoption by a crowned head, as King Charles II., of blessed memory, having been their last sovereign master ; and, as other Companies have done, in memory of the king from whom they have received the like honour, so this Company hath set up his late Majesty's statue in the Royal Exchange, and recorded his sacred name here in our register, that so the generations to come may know how far they are debtors to his memory for the foundation he laid, whereon his royal successors might build, to carry on and complete their happiness, in restoring and settling

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so pious a nursery of charities and fruitful seminary of eminent merchants and good citizens. GOD SAVE THE KING AND QUEEN."

*Income and Expenditure.*—The Grocers' Company is remarkable for the possession of the smallest Trust Income of any of the great Livery Companies, being surpassed in this respect by many of the Minor Companies. The Trust Income, for the administration of which as trustees they are responsible, is only £500, whereas their Corporate Income amounts to £37,500. It will be seen how generously they have used their corporate wealth for the support of the institutions so slenderly endowed, for the advancement of religion and the promotion of very numerous objects of public interest and utility.

The Free Grammar School and Almshouses at Oundle, Northamptonshire, constitute one of their most important charities. In 1556 Sir William Laxton, alderman of the City of London, bequeathed lands and tenements in London to the Company and charged them to found a Free Grammar School, to appoint an honest, virtuous, and learned school-master to teach grammar freely to all such as would come thither to learn, and to maintain seven poor honest men, dwellers in Oundle, to be beadmen, who should have convenient lodging and receive 8d. weekly apiece. Before 1821 the Company spent £1500 on the school premises, enlarged the school, and made increased grants to the almsmen. They founded four exhibitions of £50 each to enable boys to proceed to Oxford or Cambridge.

The amount which the Company is bound to contribute is £300 per annum. Since 1848 the annual cost has never been less than £1000, and in addition the almshouses and schools were rebuilt at a cost of £5500, six scholarships at the school were founded, £5000 expended on two boarding-houses, and another £5000 for a new recreation ground. About twenty years ago the Company greatly enlarged the scope of this benefaction. The existing school was adapted to meet more closely the needs of the people of Oundle and the neighbourhood, and was re-modelled in the form of a modern Middle-class School. A new school of a First-

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grade Classical type was founded, in which modern subjects, especially Science and Engineering, have been made a prominent feature. This has involved a large capital outlay, little short of £100,000. But Oundle School, by the successes won at the Universities and the other examinations such as the Higher Certificate and entrance to Woolwich, has taken a high place among the Public Schools of the country and fully justified the policy of the Company. The annual cost of these schools to the Company exceeds £3000.

Middle-class Education in London has also found in the Grocers' Company generous supporters. They have wisely applied the benefactions entrusted to them, the use of which has become obsolete, to the establishment of a large Middle-class Day School at Hackney Downs for the accommodation of 600 boys. They realised £26,782 from the sale of the property bequeathed to them for charitable uses now obsolete; the whole of this sum has been expended in founding the school, in addition to a voluntary contribution of £6000 by the Company; and for many years an annual sum of £3500 has been given by these generous trustees for the working of the school. This school is, without doubt, the most complete Middle-class School in London, and has proved itself a great success, imparting a sound and practical education to boys of a higher class than those who frequent the ordinary National or Board Schools.

The Company spends yearly £450 in providing exhibitions to the Universities (exclusive of those in connection with Oundle School), and are trustees for the exhibitions founded by Emma Backhouse in 1587, and Mary Robinson in 1617. They have increased the former from £5 to £50 each, and these are given to those who require some pecuniary assistance for their maintenance at the Universities.

Lady Slaney, in 1704, left a bequest of £2000 for the purpose of purchasing appropriated benefices and maintaining learned preachers in the same parishes, thus restoring and reuniting to the Church these appropriated benefices. The details of the scheme are curious and complicated, and would require much space to explain fully; let it suffice to say that

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from this fund four inappropriate benefices have been purchased at different times—in 1620, Norhill, in county of Bedford ; in 1663, All Hallows Steyning, in London ; in 1762, Bucknell, in Shropshire ; and in 1786, Ugborough, in Devonshire. The vicarage houses of two of these parishes have also been rebuilt. Thus in these cases the tithes, which were alienated from the Church at the Reformation, by Lady Slaney's bequest and the Company's action have been restored to the Church.

From this bequest some very happy results have accrued. In 1869 the Company obtained an Act of Parliament which enabled them to unite the parish of All Hallows Steyning with that of St Olave, Hart Street ; the site of the former church and vicarage were sold, and the proceeds applied to building and endowing new churches in populous and poor districts. Thus three new churches—All Hallows, Bromley-by-Bow, St Anthony's, Stepney, and St Paul's, Homerton—have been erected, at a cost of £27,000, and an endowment of £500 a year assigned to each. Not contented with this wise administration of the funds at their disposal, the Company have added £6600 out of their own funds in building a rectory and providing church furniture, etc., and they spend over £1000 a year in support of the work of the Church in these parishes.

As the London Hospital is situated near the Docks, in the centre of the business of wholesale merchants, the Grocers' Company have always regarded it as having peculiar claims on their bounty. For several years they have contributed £500, and in 1873 they gave the large sum of £20,000 towards the erection of a new wing, called "the Grocers' wing," and £5000 for its furnishing. No less than £6000 every year do the Grocers give to hospitals, dispensaries, asylums, industrial homes, orphanages, etc. Benefit societies, police-court poor-boxes, etc., all are assisted by this bountiful Company.

Lady Middleton bequeathed, in 1645, the sum of £20 to be paid yearly to ten poor clergymen's widows. The Company distribute yearly between £900 and £1000 for this object, although the £20 left by Lady

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Middleton is appropriated for the Middle-class Schools at Hackney with the sanction of the Endowed Schools Commission.

The old religious element of the Company is shown by the noble way in which they support the national Church, and by their liberality they have earned the gratitude of all Churchmen. We have seen how they have caused to spring up in the densely-populated East End of London three new churches. The funds of the Bishops of London, Winchester, and Rochester are subscribed to largely by them, and they have the patronage of eight benefices, and subscribe liberally to these parishes.

In addition to their other contributions in aid of education, they subscribe annually not less than £1000 a year to the City and Guilds Institute for Technical Education, a subscription which, when need arises, is supplemented by special donations.

One very important work the Company accomplished which has not hitherto been mentioned, viz., the endowment of scientific research. They spend £1000 a year in giving scholarships to men specially recommended for their scientific attainments for the purpose of enabling them to carry on their investigations, and to enrich the world of knowledge by their discoveries. This is a work which only a wealthy body can accomplish, as the results are, of course, very uncertain, and large sums may be expended without obtaining any actual return. It is satisfactory to know that the Company have been rewarded for their public spirit by some very useful discoveries which have been made by one of their scholars.

The Company has proved itself to be a wise and careful nurse of the charities entrusted to it, and a universal benefactor. May it long continue to promote the objects which it has so dearly at heart, and earn the gratitude to which it is so justly entitled.

## III

## THE DRAPERS' COMPANY

THE Drapers' Company can boast of very high antiquity and prestige amongst the Livery Companies of the City of London. Its origin is shrouded in the mists of time, but undoubtedly it existed in the form of a guild at a very early period. It is first heard of in the year 1180, and the Company possess a document certifying the coat-of-arms borne by Henry Fitzalwyn, Mayor of London 1189-1212, who was a member of the Company, and bequeathed to them all his lands in St Mary Bothaw.\* In former times a draper signified a maker of woollen cloth, and not, as now, a dealer in that or other articles. "To drape" then meant to manufacture cloth, and is derived from the French *drapierie*, which signified clothwork. The history of the clothing industry is full of interest. For many centuries our countrymen were a nation of farmers, and the rich store of fleeces grown on English soil was shipped over to the Netherlands, where the industrious burghers manufactured them into cloth. The Staplers were the middlemen who collected the fleeces and sold them to the foreign manufacturer. There is reason to suppose that "draper" and "clothier" both described the same trade; the former signifying the maker of cloth who lived in, or near, London; the latter meaning one who resided in the country, and sent the produce of his looms to London. One of our earliest historical romances, entitled *Thomas Cole; or, the Six Worthy Yeomen of the West*, and written by Thomas Deloney in the reign of Elizabeth, describes the worthy clothier of Reading, who had his train of waggons and astonished the king by his wealth. This king the author

\* He lived in a fair house near the Church of St Swithin, which now preserves in its wall the famous Roman milestone, an interesting relic of Roman London. Bothaw, or Bote Haw, was probably named from a neighbouring boat-building yard or haw.

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supposes to be Henry I., but it is very doubtful whether there were any rich clothiers in England at that early period, although there was undoubtedly a Weavers' Guild in London, founded by Henry I. Edward III. greatly encouraged the manufacture by prohibiting the exportation of wool and by inviting Flemish weavers to this country, who settled in Candlewick ward.\* The very frequent wars, troubles, and persecutions, which raged in the Netherlands, caused many immigrations of industrious weavers to this country, who enriched us by the art and skill which they introduced.

The earliest Charter of the Drapers was granted by Edward III. in 1364, which ordained that none should use the art and mystery of drapery in the city or suburbs unless they had been apprenticed thereto, or in other due manner admitted by common consent of the mystery; and that dyers, weavers, and fullers should keep to their proper crafts, and not meddle with drapery, upon pain of imprisonment and forfeiture of the cloth or its value; and that none should sell cloth in the city or suburbs except drapers free of the mystery. From this charter it is evident that the members of the Drapers' Company had a monopoly of the trade, and when, a few years later, in 1397, Blackwell Hall was established, it was ordered that no one could buy or sell woollen cloth unless it had been first offered for sale in Blackwell Market. The keeper of this market was nominated by the Drapers' Company. In 1438 Henry VI. granted a Charter of Incorporation, and several other charters were granted at subsequent periods confirming to the Company their power for the regulation of the trade.

The Drapers' Company possess some valuable documents. Their by-laws date from 1418, and they have a most interesting collection of wardens' accounts, which begin in 1415, and form a curious record of the history of the Association. The objects of the Company are thus set forth in the preamble to the ordinances of 1503:—"In the worship of God, and of His Blessed Mother, and of all the holy company of heaven.

\* Candlewick Street is now called Cannon Street.



*Great Dining Room of the Drapers Company.*



## THE DRAPERS' COMPANY

For to abate rancour, and more highly to increase charity, and to maintain love. All the worshipful Fellowship of the Drapers of the City of London, gathered and assembled in John Hende's Hall in Saint Swythyn's Lane, the xi. day of June, the year of grace MCCCC. and v., and in the reign of King Henry IV. . . . to oversee the points and articles ordained of old time of their fraternity, which began in the year of grace MCCCXXXII., and with good deliberation having said on them, so that those they thought reasonable and profitable they confirmed : the which points, with other, been written in this book, praying all that after them shall come in the aforesaid Fellowship, the same points and articles to examine ; and if they think by their wits that any point may be amended, the same to do then by their good diligence, by incorporating of the old with putting to of new, such as they shall think to increase worship to God and profit to all the Fellowship." The points relate to the government, dress, and observances of the Company, and the matters regulated by them are—the finding of two priests to sing for the whole fraternity, maintenance of an altar light, giving of livery, annual meetings at divine service, election of wardens, contributions for the annual feast, payment of quarterage, choosing new livery, relief of poor members, funeral services, and the remembrance of the souls of deceased brethren and sisters by the Company's priests, attendance at meetings of the fellowship, correction of members and settlement of bargains between them, meetings for processions, time of attendance at Westminster, Bartholomew, and Southwark Fairs, etc.

In reading these records we seem to see the members of this ancient Company clad in their violet or scarlet liveries (the dress of the drapers was very gorgeous, and varied every year), going in procession to Bow Church or to St Michael's, Cornhill, to hear the Lady Mass, and offering a silver penny on the altar, and then marching to the hall, and dining in state with their wives in the parlour, "according to old custom." We see them accompanying the new Sheriffs by water to Westminster in their State barge, while the minstrels played gay tunes, or taking their

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"potacions at our Lady Fair in Southwark," when they made the trade search. Curious pictures of bygone manners rise before us as we read of "The craft being cessed for *xl.* persons to ride to meet the King (Edward IV.) at his coming from beyond the sea," or of the entry "for cresset-staffs and banners, and bread, ale and candell, in keeping *xvii.* days' watch after the riot at the steelyard." They furnished Sebastian Cabot with a ship for a voyage of discovery to Newfoundland. At the Reformation they redeemed much of their property which had been bequeathed for "superstitious" purposes, and which were seized by order of the King. In 1607 an entirely new Charter was granted to the Company by James I., incorporating them by their ancient style of "The Master and Wardens and Brethren and Sisters of the Guild or Fraternity of the Blessed Mary the Virgin of the Mystery of Drapers of the City of London;" and under this Charter the Company has been governed until the present time.

The Company suffered severe losses on account of loans advanced for the public service, and through the destruction of its property by the Great Fire. "Other inferior companies" seem to have trespassed on the rights and privileges of this ancient and honoured body of citizens in the matter of apprenticeship, and we find that in 1684 a committee reported that, "whereas anciently all persons using the trade of woollen drapery were free of the fraternity, now many using the same were free of other companies, to the great decay of the Company," and recommended a return to ancient usage and custom.

In the time of William and Mary, the Drapers' Company practically ceased to have any close connection with the trade, the name of which it bears, and the exercise of their authority over it fell into disuse. The Wardens attended at Bartholomew and Southwark Fairs for the last time in 1737. For some years later the officers received the customary fees; but at length the fairs themselves were abolished on account of the rowdiness and excess which followed these ancient institutions.

Since the abolition of its special trade functions the Company has

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returned to the pursuit of its primary objects, and its members turned their attention to the administration and development of the charities for which they are the trustees. They have to administer large corporate revenues for many and various objects of public usefulness, of which some account will be hereafter given.

As a proof of the high prestige and distinction which the Drapers' Company enjoyed in the Middle Ages, it should be noted that in 1439 they received a grant of arms—an honour conferred on few of the Companies at that period. It was given them by Sir William Bruges, Garter King-of-Arms, in the seventeenth year of the thrice Christian King, Henry VI. The coat-of-arms was confirmed by William Harvey, and subsequently by William Segar, Knight Garter, in 1634.

*Hall and Treasures.*—The first hall of the Company was in St Swithin's Lane, Cannon Street, and is mentioned in 1405. In the Middle Ages the hall of a Company was a second home to the citizen. He lived and worked close by, and at the hall he met his friends, discussed trade and public affairs, and took with him his wife and his daughters (at least, this privilege was allowed to the drapers), for whom special accommodation seems to have been provided. We read of the Lady Mayoress entertaining the Aldermen's ladies and others at Drapers' Hall in 1479, when two harts, six bucks, and a tun of wine were sent by Edward IV. to grace the board. The hall consisted of a refectory, a great chamber, parlours, and kitchen, a store-house for cloth, and a "scalding-yard." The walls of the rooms were ornamented with tapestry. The dining-hall provided accommodation for about 300 persons, and before three large fireplaces the huge joints were roasted for the feasts. Ladies were always honoured guests, and sometimes they dined alone, the married ladies in the ladies' chamber, while the "chekker chamber" was reserved for "maydens."

The entertainments of this Company seem to have been particularly splendid, and we find ourselves in the presence of many persons of high rank : city magnates and their wives, bishops, abbots, priors, knights, and squires, a very goodly company. Time would fail to tell of the rich

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viands, the swans and “ fesannts,” besides the sirloins of beef, the veal and mutton, provided for one entertainment.

In 1541 the Company purchased the site of the present hall in Throgmorton Street from Henry VIII., where then stood the noble house of Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, upon whose attainder it was forfeited to the Crown. It was a fine edifice, with a great gate, courtyard, with a gallery on one side, hall, with two bay windows and clerestories, buttery, pantry, cellars, kitchen, several other apartments, and a garden. This garden was of very large extent, and appears at one time to have been used for drying and bleaching linen and woollen cloth, but this privilege was subsequently confined to the wardens of the Company. There was also a bowling green, and on holy days the gardens were thrown open to the public.

The Fire of London does not seem to have spread further than Drapers' Hall, but most of their buildings were destroyed except a house in the garden which preserved their writings and afforded them slender accommodation, until in 1667 they began their new hall. Some of their plate was preserved in the mouth of a common sewer in the garden. Mr Jarman, the architect of Fishmongers' Hall, designed the new edifice, which was partially destroyed by fire in 1774, and again rebuilt.

The present beautiful hall of the Drapers' Company in Throgmorton Street was erected in 1870; the buildings are in the form of a quadrangle, and in the centre is a square court. A quiet stillness pervades the place, which is refreshing to the visitor after passing through the bustling throng of stockbrokers in the adjoining street. In the principal reception-room, superbly furnished, there are two fine pieces of statuary, four panels filled with splendid specimens of Gobelins tapestry, made in Paris in the reign of Louis XV. The Company possess some very interesting plate, amongst which may be mentioned a silver-gilt cup by Cellini, presented in 1578, bearing the curious inscription :—

“A proctor for the poor am I,  
Remember them before thou die.”



THE GARDEN—THE HALL OF THE DRAPERS' COMPANY



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A fine monteith bears the hall mark of 1685, and amongst other examples of the silversmiths' art may be mentioned a large voiding knife of the date 1678, as big as a sabre, for removing crumbs from the table-cloth. In the court-room there are some tapestries, a fine portrait of Nelson painted by Sir W. Beechey in 1805, busts of Queen Victoria and of the Prince Consort, a painting of Mary Queen of Scots and her son, by F. Zuccherino, and of a great benefactor, Sir W. Boreman, Clerk of the Green Cloth, in the reign of Charles II., who founded the Greencoat School at Greenwich. There are also portraits of John Smith, by Gainsborough; Sir Robert Clayton, by Richardson; Henry VIII., a copy of Holbein's celebrated picture; Thomas Bagshaw, Thomas Hardwick, Charles I., the famous Henry Fitzalwyn, first Lord Mayor of London, Thomas Gregory, and J. Taber, by Richmond. In the large hall, a very noble room, there are some life-size portraits of the Hanoverian kings, several busts of royal personages, handsome windows and marble columns, while the mottoes on the walls proclaim the objects which the Company endeavour to promote: "Relieve the Oppressed," "Love the Brotherhood," "Unto God only be Honour and Glory" (the Company's own motto).

*Income, Charities and Expenditure.*—We will now proceed to describe some of the charities and gifts which have been entrusted to the care of the Company by pious benefactors. The whole Trust Income amounts to nearly £32,000, their Corporate Income to £50,000, a very large amount of which is spent in benevolent objects.

The Company does not possess much Church patronage. The rectory of St Michael's, Cornhill, is the only benefice in their gift. Until recently they had the appointment of a lecturer at the same church, to whom they gave £40 yearly from the Rainey's Charity and £30 from their corporate funds. As trustees of Pennoyer's Charity they appoint a lecturer at St Stephen's, Bristol, and also the Master of Lucas's Hospital, at Wokingham, who receives £100 a year and a house.

Very few scholarships at the Universities have been entrusted to the Company. One John Russell, in 1593, amongst other bequests, left two

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small scholarships for poor scholars. A new scheme for the administration of this charity has been devised, and the scholarships are largely increased out of the Company's private funds. Sir Thomas Adams left, in 1666, the sum of £40 yearly to be paid to the Arabic Professor at Cambridge, the payment of which has been continued to the present time.

The Drapers have proved themselves to be warm supporters of education, and subscribe about £20,000 per annum to the promotion of general and technical instruction. They subscribed for several years £4000 a year to the City and Guilds of London Institute for the advancement of technical education, and gave £10,000 towards the building and fitting of the Finsbury Technical College. At Tottenham they founded a school for sons and grandsons of freemen of the Company, called Drapers' College, which they built and for many years maintained entirely out of their corporate funds at an annual cost of about £3000. Drapers' College has, however, now ceased to exist. It was found that the number of freemen's sons who were in a position to avail themselves of the advantages of the school was few, and the Company wisely decided to provide for the education of the children at existing schools, and the building is now used for the Tottenham High School for Girls, which is largely assisted out of the corporate funds of the Company. At Tottenham, on the same estate, they have also a set of almshouses.

In 1728 Francis Bancroft bequeathed a large amount to the Company for the purpose of founding a school and almshouses. This estate yields over £6000 per annum, and was devoted to the support of the school and almshouses at Mile End. Some years ago the school was transplanted to Woodford in Essex, and considerably enlarged. The Company gave, out of their corporate funds, £50,000 to meet the cost of the new buildings. It is now a boarding and day school, and provides accommodation for over 300 boys. Nine or ten places are offered yearly for competition among the scholars of the public elementary schools of the Metropolis, for which the competition is very keen. The school has been very successful, a

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DRAPERS' COMPANY.—HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS, TOTTENHAM

sound mathematical training, modern languages, and science, being the special features of the school curriculum.

Thomas Corney, who was Master of the Company in 1857, bequeathed £3000 for the establishment of a Female Orphan School. Thirty-eight girls find a comfortable home here; they are boarded and clothed, in an interesting old house at Tottenham, with part of the money, and education is provided for them at the Tottenham High School—formerly Drapers' College.

There are nineteen loan charities held in trust by the Company, which amount to about £4000. This sum is spent in making loans to freemen of the Company, in order to enable them to embark in some trade or business. The charities which were left for the benefit of poor debtors languishing in the Ludgate, Poultry, or Wood Street compters, have been applied for the purpose of providing scholarships to children attending the schools under the management of the London School Board.

In 1530 Thomas Howell bequeathed to the Company a large sum of money for the purpose of providing marriage portions for orphans related

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to him. Under schemes approved by the Court of Chancery this estate is now employed for the purpose of maintaining five schools for girls, the two principal schools being one at Llandaff and the other at Denbigh. The income of this benefaction is now over £6000, and the schools have been most successful. At Llandaff there are sixty foundation scholars and 100 day scholars, and in regard to the obtaining of scholarships, the school has proved itself to be in the foremost rank of all schools in the United Kingdom. A few years ago one of the girls obtained a scholarship at Girton College, which is considered to be the "blue ribbon" of female scholastic distinctions. At Denbigh there are 100 scholars, of which fifty-five are on the foundation. The school at Denbigh is managed under a curious scheme authorised by the Chancery Courts, by which it is controlled by local governors appointed by the Company, who also appoint the teachers. The others have independent schemes.

Henry Colbron, in 1650, founded schools at Goosnagh and Kirkham, in Lancashire, and placed them in charge of the Company. Under the new scheme approved by Her Majesty in Council in 1880, the Company continue to appoint the governors of the schools, but have no longer any influence in the management.

Sir John Jolles, in 1618, left to the Company about £50 a year for the maintenance of almshouses at Tottenham, and a school at Bow. For many years the Company have expended in addition about £470. The school at Bow has now ceased to exist. On account of the establishment of numerous schools under the provisions of the Public Elementary Education Act, it was felt that the Company's school was no longer needed, and the money is expended in providing exhibitions to scholars at these schools.

There was also a Greencoat School at Greenwich, founded by Sir William Boreman, Clerk of the Green Cloth in the reign of Charles II., to which bequest William Clavell, in 1718, made some addition. The school was intended for sons of seamen.

The establishment of public elementary schools affected the welfare of

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the school, and the Company felt that, owing to the falling off in the number of boys attending the school, it was not greatly benefiting mankind. However, a new scheme was devised, and the bequest is now administered under the name of Sir William Boreman's foundation, and provides for the education of 100 boys, who, by an arrangement with the Government and the Admiralty, are received into the Upper Nautical School of Greenwich Hospital, and educated for the navy and mercantile marine service. The education of the boys is paid for from the Boreman and Clavell bequests. Out of the same fund exhibitions are provided for the higher education of girls. The whole scheme works admirably, and does a large amount of good, and it is satisfactory to find that the original intentions of the founder are entirely carried out.

The almshouses in connection with the Company are very numerous. They have 200 in the neighbourhood of London alone, and many others in different parts of the country. It may be stated here that the Company take the greatest possible interest in the charities entrusted to their care, and fully recognise the importance of their responsibility as trustees. These charities were founded by members of the Company, who had so much confidence in the integrity and goodwill of their fellow-members that they placed the control of their bequests entirely in the Company's charge. This certainly is a good testimonial for the Company, and anyone who will take the trouble to investigate will see that the confidence of the donors was not misplaced. Lucas's Hospital, near Wokingham, was founded by Henry Lucas in 1663, and consists of a chapel, master's house, and sets of rooms for twelve poor men, chosen from parishes in the neighbourhood.

An important feature of the Drapers' Company is the apprenticeship charities. It is popularly supposed that the apprenticeship system has had its day, and is now no longer needed; but this has not been the experience of the Drapers' Company. They have two important charities devoted to this purpose, that of Samuel Pennoyer, founded in 1652, which grants premiums of £50 to fatherless children, and for which girls are also

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eligible ; and that of Henry Dixon, founded in 1693, for the purpose of apprenticing boys to handicraft trades, the maximum premium being £25. The applications for these are so numerous, and the Company are so well satisfied with the excellent results of this scheme, that they supplement the income of the charity, which amounts to £1300, by a grant of £500 per annum out of their corporate funds. One hundred boys are apprenticed annually, and it is satisfactory to know that a large number of them turn out well. The Company act *in loco parentis*, make careful inquiries about the boys, and the results of their fatherly care and interest in their *protégés* are altogether satisfactory. They have also two smaller charities of a similar nature confined to sons of freemen.

Very few people seem to be aware of the very distinguished part which the Drapers' Company played in the foundation of the People's Palace. When Mr Besant stirred men's minds by his powerful novel, entitled *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*, and certain enthusiastic persons were moved to try to infuse some "sweetness and light" into the dismal corners of the East End, the only requisite needed was money. This the Drapers' Company supplied. When the idea was first mooted, they offered £20,000 to float the scheme. Altogether they have given considerably more than £70,000, in addition to an annual sum of £7000. It was a princely gift, and grateful should the people feel to the Company for their generosity. It is not too much to say that the People's Palace would never have been built but for the munificence of the Drapers' Company, and when we consider how that Palace has been the forerunner of several similar institutions, the inaugurator of a new system for infusing healthy recreation, refined amusements, and useful knowledge into the social life of the East-end population of London, it is difficult for us to calculate the amount of good which has thus been conferred upon the people by the Company who started this movement.

The School Board for London some years ago turned their attention to providing manual classes for the instruction of children attending the elementary schools in carpentry and other trades. Since 1900 they have

## THE DRAPERS' COMPANY

been enabled to provide this important branch of the training of a workman's child out of the rates; but, previous to this, the Drapers' Company gave £1000 per annum for this purpose, and through their action in this matter a change in the law of the country has been effected, and manual instruction placed within the reach of all.

We have already noticed their generous support of technical education, of the City and Guilds of London Institute. Nor do they confine their benevolence to the metropolis. They encourage technical education in several provincial centres by making annual grants. The places thus assisted are Nottingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Cardiff, Bangor, and Belfast. They have also established scholarships at Newnham and Girton, at the Royal University of Ireland, and at the University College of North Wales.

With regard to actual Church work, the Company have recently built a large mission-room at Page Green, Tottenham, at a cost of £2500, which will ultimately be replaced by a church. The Bishop of London's Fund receives from them a yearly contribution of £100, and other Church charities are liberally supported. They have contributed largely to the restoration of the interesting Church of St Helen, Bishopsgate, and erected a new chancel screen at a cost of £350.

The conversion of the University of London into a teaching University with incorporated colleges has long been the earnest desire of educational reformers. Want of wealth has hitherto been the great hindrance to the perfection of such a scheme. The Drapers' Company has recently made a grant of £30,000 for this purpose, and this generous offer, if the conditions under which it is made are fulfilled, may be the means of creating a real University for London, and confer immense educational advantages not only on the Metropolis but upon the country at large.

The good works of the Company of Drapers are many and manifold, and we take our leave of them with the conviction that no public or private institution could perform its duties more conscientiously and thoroughly, nor make better use of the wealth which pious benefactors have bequeathed and entrusted to their care.

## IV

## THE FISHMONGERS' COMPANY

THIS Company existed at a very remote period, and although the charters and archives were destroyed in the Great Fire of London, there is evidence of its establishment prior to the reign of Henry II. In the Charter granted to the Company by Edward III. in 1364 it is stated that "the mystery of Fishmongers had grants from the King's progenitors in ancient times." The antiquity, therefore, of the Company is well established.

In its original form it resembled the other ancient Companies, being an association of persons combined together and contributing to a common fund, and having for their objects mutual protection, especially in their trade of fishmongers, the enjoyment of social intercourse, and the making provision for indigent members, their widows and children. In accordance with the usual plan for the promotion of trade, Edward III. granted a monopoly to the Fishmongers' Company, forbidding any person who did not belong to the mystery to intermeddle with their trade, and directing them to elect four persons to oversee the buying and selling of fish "for the common commodity of our people." The Company received their Charter of Incorporation from Richard II., which was confirmed by subsequent sovereigns. There were originally two communities, the Salt-fishmongers and Stock-fishmongers, which were united by Richard II., again separated by Henry VII., and finally united by Henry VIII. The large number of Charters granted to the Company, the great privileges assigned to them, and the general importance of their trade caused them to occupy a very high position among the Livery Companies of London.

The history of the fishing industry contains many curious and inter-



*Hall of the Fishmongers' Company  
River Front.*



## THE FISHMONGERS' COMPANY

esting features, and carries us back to the time when the whole population of the country were in the habit of using fish diet on one or two days in each week ; when, during Lent, fish was the staple food of English folk ; when fish-ponds were found in the garden of every country house, and *anguilonia*, or receptacles for capturing eels, were seen on most of our rivers. The Royal tables seem to have been abundantly provided at all times with fish : salted salmon, mackerel, sturgeon, whale, sole, turbot, oysters, carp, cray-fish, pike (from the King's pike-ponds, Southwark), and herrings were some of the dainties which graced the Royal board. Lampreys, a kind of eel, caused one king's death. Herrings were sent to London from Hull or Yarmouth by the *last*, or ten thousand, as early as the reign of Edward I. A bold race of skilled fishermen then plied their trade along the Norfolk coast, and made the ports of Cromer, Clay, and Blakeney, thriving towns. Their descendants still remain, and it is curious to notice how distinct and separate a community the fisher-folk form. Whether on the French or English coast, they are a peculiar race, dark-haired, dark-eyed, intermarrying among themselves, and distinguished not only by their appearance, but by their courage and daring.

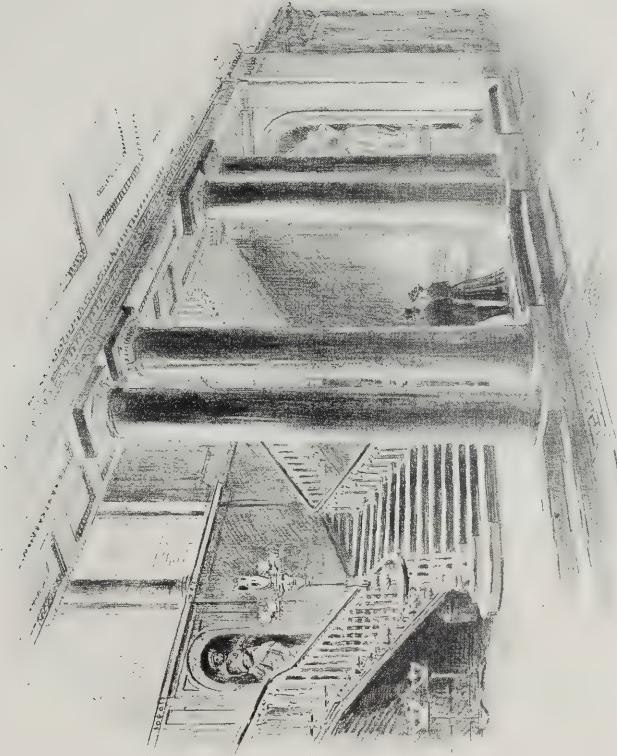
The fish trade was subject to many restrictions. No one was allowed to forestall fish, to store it in cellars in order to retail it afterwards at exorbitant prices, to keep any fish, except salt fish, beyond the second day, to water fish twice, or to sell what was bad. The stocks in the market-place were the punishment for the third infraction of these rules. In former times, as at the present day, Billingsgate was the centre of the fish trade, and the old fish-market extended from Bread Street to Old Change, having Old Fish Street on the south. No fishmongers were allowed to meet the boats before they reached the landing-stages, and were to confine their buying within the prescribed bounds—the Chapel on London Bridge, Baynard's Castle, and Jordan's Quay. For a time the trade was carried on near Queenhithe, to which wharf Henry III. ordered all fish to be brought in order to increase the import duties

## THE CITY COMPANIES

assigned to his queen, Matilda. The prices of fish were somewhat moderate, as soles were limited to threepence a dozen, turbot to sixpence, the best pickled herrings to twenty for a penny, and, oh, lover of oysters ! thy favourite fish could then be bought for twopence per gallon. In spite of such prices, which, on account of the different values of money, were, of course, not so extremely small, the fishmongers attained to great wealth and opulence, and showed their riches, when they met King Edward I. on his victorious return from the Scottish wars, in a gorgeous pageant, consisting of gilt sturgeon and silver salmon on horseback, and gallant knights in splendid panoply. Nor did they show themselves submissive to their neighbours in the matter of precedence, and furious were their fights with their neighbours the Skinners, so that Cheap-side rang with their strife, and many heads were broken, and some struck off. With the Goldsmiths they were always fast friends, and it is pleasant to notice that, after their great fight, the Skinners and Fishmongers forgot their quarrels, and lived in amity. Another proof of their wealth was their large contribution to Edward III. for his French wars, being only one pound less than the sum subscribed by the richest of all the Companies—the Mercers.

But hard times were in store for the Fishmongers during the reign of Richard II. ; in spite of their Charter one iniquitous John de Northampton, Lord Mayor of London, dared to assert, and to compel them to admit, that their occupation was not worthy to be considered a mystery. For a brief space it was enacted that no member of the Company should occupy the dignity of Mayor, and that any one in amity with the King might trade in fish. These Acts, so obnoxious to the Company, were shortly repealed, and the monopoly was restored to them.

It appears that disputes frequently arose between members of the two branches of the fish trade—the Salt-fishmongers and the Stock-fishmongers. Happily these quarrels were amicably settled in the time of Henry VIII. by uniting the two branches in one Company, having a



THE GRAND STAIRCASE—THE HALL OF THE FISHMONGERS' COMPANY



## THE FISHMONGERS' COMPANY

common hall and property, and one chapel, namely, that of St Michael, Crooked Lane.

Upon the dissolution of religious foundations the Company redeemed from the Crown the property which had been appropriated, and together with the other Companies paid no less a sum than £18,744 to the Royal Exchequer. A new Charter was granted to them by James I., which reincorporated the Company with its present governing body of six wardens and twenty-eight assistants, in whom it vested powers to make laws for the good government of the wardens and commonalty of the mystery, and of all freemen and other persons in London and Southwark, the suburbs, liberties and precincts thereof, exercising the mystery, their servants, apprentices, things and merchandise. It gave to the Company full and entire survey, search, government, and correction of all persons of whatsoever art or mystery, selling or having, possessing, or keeping to sell, any salted fish, salted herrings, fresh fish of the sea, salmon, stock-fish, or any other fishes whatsoever, with power of entering any house, shop, ship, cellar, wharf, and any other place where any such fish shall be laid or housed, and to view, search, and survey whether the same be wholesome for man's body, and fit to be sold, or no; and if found unwholesome, corrupt, or unfit to be sold, it is declared lawful to the said wardens, the same bad, unwholesome, and corrupt fish from the owners thereof to seize, and thereof to dispose according to the laws of England and customs of the said City of London and borough aforesaid.

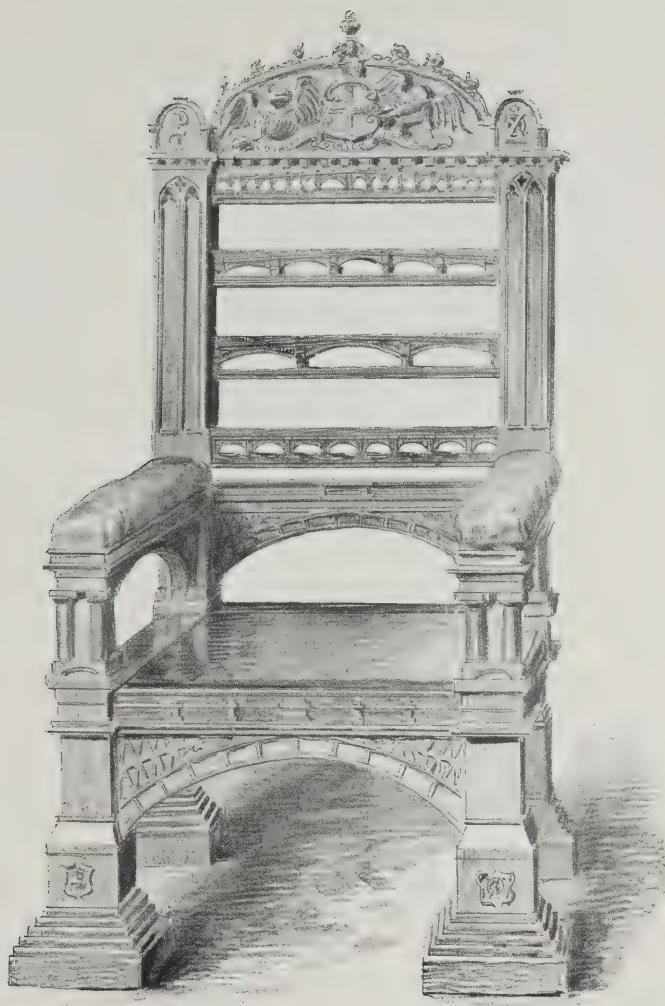
This jurisdiction the Company continue to exercise, and appoint officers called "fishmeters," whose main duty is to attend Billingsgate Market, and to seize and condemn unsound fish. The Company defray all the salaries and charges of these officers, remove the corrupt fish, and also prosecute all who sell or offer for sale fish in "close time."

The Company suffered on account of the *Quo warranto* proceedings of Charles II., regaining their full privileges under William III., and have ever since continued their useful existence, being forward in all

## THE CITY COMPANIES

good works, and administering with generous care the charities entrusted to them.

*Hall and Treasures.*—At one time the Company possessed as many as six halls, while it still consisted of two branches—the Stock-fishmongers and the Salt-fishmongers. There were two halls, side by side, in Thames Street, two in Old Fish Street, and two in New Fish Street. The site of the present hall is, in part, the same which was occupied by the Company in early times. Herbert, in his *History of the Livery Companies*, traces, with great fulness, the descent of the property which, from very early times, has been associated with the trade. In the time of Edward III. it was occupied by one John Lovekyn, a stock-fishmonger, and four times Mayor of London, who established his stall for selling fish on the open strand, on the river's bank at this spot, and was followed by other members of his craft. Thus Stock-fishmonger Row was formed. Soon the stalls were replaced by shops, and afterwards tall houses were erected. John Lovekyn's property descended to the famous Sir William Walworth, twice Lord Mayor, formerly an apprentice of Lovekyn, who did good service to King Richard II. by killing, with his own hand, Wat Tyler, the ringleader of a formidable rebellion, although the deed was done somewhat treacherously, and, like the murder of Sisera, requires certain explanations. From him it passed to Sir William Askam, Thomas Botiller, Sir Thomas Sackville, and others; then to Sir John Cornwall, Lord Fanhope, and in 1434 to the Wardens and Commonalty of the Craft of Fishmongers. In the time of Henry VII. the Company resolved to abandon all their other halls “for their house in Thames Street, of the gift of the Lord Fanhope.” This hall became the joint property of the two branches of the fish-traders on their amalgamation, the Stock-fishmongers' Hall being subsequently let to private persons. One of the articles of agreement was, that “all assemblies of Courts, as well for the good, politic guiding and order of the same craft, and for the amendment and reformation of misdemeaned persons of the same craft, to the good orders and rules of the same, as for any other cause



CHAIR

Made of Stone and Wood taken from the Foundations of Old London Bridge.  
In the possession of the Fishmongers' Company



## THE FISHMONGERS' COMPANY

concerning the mystery, shall be holden, kept, and used in the place commonly called Fishmongers' Hall, which is the gift of Lord Fanhope."

The Great Fire wrought devastation in Thames Street, where large quantities of oil, hemp, tar, spirits, and other combustibles were stored. Starting in Pudding Lane in the vicinity it crossed the end of London Bridge, and the hall of the Company must have been the first large building destroyed by the terrible conflagration. It consisted of a large square pile of masonry, having towers at the angles, and a central gateway facing the river. It had two courtyards, separated by the high-roofed and turreted dining-hall, and its whole appearance resembled that of a castle. The new hall was built under the direction of Mr Jarman, the architect who was responsible for the Drapers' Hall, built at the same period. This was followed by the present palatial building, erected in 1831, at the same time that new London Bridge was built. The appearance of the hall, grand staircase, and vestibules is very fine and magnificent. On ascending the stairs we see a large statue of Sir William Walworth, carved out of oak by Pierce, and beneath the figure there is the following inscription :—

"Brave Walworth, Knight, Lord Mayor, slew  
Rebellious Tyler in his alarms ;  
The King therefore did give in lieu  
The dagger in the City Arms.  
Fourth year of Richard II., 1381."

It is extremely doubtful whether this latter statement be true. The weapon represented in the City Arms is probably not a dagger but a sword, and I think has nothing to do with "Brave Walworth's" deed. There is a statue also of St Peter, the patron saint of fishers, himself having been a fisherman. An interesting relic of bygone battles and the prowess of our naval heroes is the flag presented to Admiral Earl St Vincent off Cape St Vincent in 1797. A number of royal portraits adorn the walls, and in the vestibule are several busts and a painting of

## THE CITY COMPANIES

Lord Hatherley by Wells. In the court dining-room there are two fine paintings by Romney of the Margrave and Margravine of Anspach. The drawing-room is beautifully furnished, and the hall is a noble chamber adorned with the shields of the past Prime Wardens of the Company, and with portraits of the Dukes of Sussex and Kent, and Queen Victoria. The court waiting-room contains some very interesting treasures, conspicuous amongst which are a portrait of Admiral Earl St Vincent, and the pall which is said to have been made previous to 1381, and to have been used at Walworth's funeral. It was worked by some nuns, and is very beautiful and in splendid preservation. The arms of the Fishmongers appear in the work, and a representation of the presentation of keys by our Lord to St Peter.\* The room contains also some good paintings of fish by Arnold von Hacken, 1767, and Scott's pictures of old London Bridge and Westminster Bridge, prior to 1757, and many others. The large representation of a pageant in former days of ancient splendour gives a good idea of one of London's old scenes of civic state.

*Income, Charities and Expenditure.*—Having now described the Company's ancient home and history, we will proceed to give an account of their income, and of the good use which they make of their wealth. The total income of the Fishmongers' Company is £57,506. Their Trust Income, inclusive of the Gresham Trust, amounts to only £8387, while their Corporate Income is £49,119.

It will be found, after due examination of their expenditure, that the Company have identified themselves with all objects of public utility at the present day, in addition to the work of promoting the welfare of the industry with which they are officially connected. It has already been stated that they appoint and pay the salaries of the "fishmeters" who protect the citizens of London from buying unwholesome fish. They also assist in maintaining a Biological Laboratory at Plymouth for the study of marine life. The National Sea Fisheries Protection Association

\* This pall, though known as the Walworth pall, is evidently the work of the sixteenth century.



WALWORTH PALL.

Worked by Nuns in Queen Elizabeth's time. In the possession of the Fishmongers' Company



## THE FISHMONGERS' COMPANY

is practically carried on by the Company ; it has offices at the hall, and the clerk of the Company conducts its useful operations for the preservation of fish. Very active steps are taken with regard to the fishing industry, including the prevention of the sale of certain kinds of fish in close time.

The Company took a leading part in inaugurating the Fisheries' Exhibition in 1882. In the hall of the Fishmongers was the idea of instituting this very successful exhibition first mooted, and at its close the Prince of Wales and many other royal guests dined with the Company. In their efforts to foster the fishing industry, the Company would be glad to have their powers extended, in order that they may be enabled to secure for the inhabitants of the metropolis a more abundant supply of fish, and to render this important article of food more accessible to the people.

With regard to technical education, this Company has given as much as £102,000. They helped to found the City and Guilds of London Institute, subscribing largely to its support, and have also founded a Hersley Scholarship of £60 per annum, to be held by a scholar of the Finsbury Technical College at the Central College at South Kensington.

The promotion of general education has always been a feature of the Company's work. They have established forty exhibitions, ranging from £20 to £50, for the education of sons and daughters of their freemen. They have exhibitions of £40 per annum, tenable at Oxford, or Cambridge, or University College, London, or King's College, London. Some of these were founded originally by pious benefactors, and have been largely augmented out of the corporate funds of the Company. They have established four scholarships of £50 for pupils proceeding from the City of London School to one of the Universities, and also four similar scholarships for the City of London Middle-class School, Cowper Street, City Road. Newnham and Girton Colleges have also received contributions from this Company.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

Sir John Gresham founded a school at Holt, in Norfolk, in 1554, and placed its government in the hands of the Company ; it was reconstituted under a Scheme of the Charity Commissioners, which was approved 7th October 1890. The endowment of the Foundation is administered by the Fishmongers' Company as Estate Trustees, and the School of the Foundation by a Governing Body consisting of the Prime Warden, sixteen Representative Governors and three Co-optative Governors. A new and enlarged school has recently been erected at a cost of about £40,000, to accommodate 200 scholars and boarders. There is a large staff of masters, and the system of education is based on modern lines.

Although the Company have no Church patronage, they contribute liberally to the support of Church work.

The Fishmongers' Company have the management of three important hospitals or almshouses. At Bray, in Berkshire, famous for its notable vicar, there stands the ancient Jesus Hospital, founded in 1616 under the will of William Goddard, who directed that there should be built rooms with chimneys in the said hospital, fit and convenient for forty poor people to dwell and inhabit in, and that there should be one chapel or place convenient to serve Almighty God in for ever, with public and divine prayers and other exercises of religion, and also one kitchen and bakehouse common to all the poor people of the said hospital. Six of the inmates were to be the most aged and poorest decayed persons of the Company of Fishmongers over fifty years of age, and the remaining thirty-four inmates were to be chosen from the poor folk of the village of Bray. Jesus Hospital is a quadrangular building, containing forty almshouses, surrounding a court divided into gardens, one of which is attached to each house. A recent visitor from London has described in the columns of a daily newspaper the happiness and contentment of the old people, who there find in the eventide of life a cheerful home in such peaceful and beautiful surroundings. Each of the Company's almsfolk receives about £40 per annum if married, and £28 if single, and the other persons about £20. The original bequests have been increased



FISHMONGERS' COMPANY.—ENTRANCE TO JESUS HOSPITAL, BRAY.



## THE FISHMONGERS' COMPANY

in recent years by the generous gifts of Mr John Hibbert, Mr George Pearce and Mr William Joshua Clark.

Another almshouse of the Company is one at Harrietsham, in Kent, founded by Mark Quested, citizen and fishmonger of London, in 1642, for twelve almsfolk, men or women, six being poor members of the Company, and six parishioners of Harrietsham. The almshouses were rebuilt in 1772 by the Company, and consist of twelve distinct houses with a good garden attached to each. The inmates receive about the same amount yearly as the almsfolk at Bray. The Company has the management of St Peter's Hospital, Wandsworth, formerly called Fishmongers' Almshouses, which was erected by the Company for the benefit of poor men and women free of the Company. The original foundation has been increased by subsequent benefactions, amongst which was that of James Hulbert, who left in 1719 about £9000 for the building and endowing of a new almshouse for twenty poor men and women. At the present time there are forty-two houses, and each inmate if married receives £48; if single, £36 per annum.

Old-age pensions are now receiving from various bodies the attention which they deserve. But for some time the Fishmongers' Company have given such pensions to poor freemen of their body. They have sometimes as many as 225 weekly pensioners, who receive various sums according to their needs, the amounts varying from 2s. 6d. to 25s. per week.

We see in the newspapers each year an account of a rowing match amongst the watermen of London for "Doggett's Badge," the origin of which is known probably to few people. It appears that Mr Thomas Doggett was a comedian, who left a sum of money, which yields about £10 yearly, to provide a silver badge and coat as a prize to be contended for yearly on August 1st. Sir William Joliffe supplemented this gift, and the Company provide extra prizes for prowess in rowing.

There are several small loan charities, thirty-three in all, amounting to £2911, which sum is lent to poor members of the Company applying

## THE CITY COMPANIES

for the same, and enables them to start in business, or to tide over a period of adversity and to wait for better times.

Very numerous charitable institutions are assisted each year by the Company, and nearly £4000 is given annually to hospitals, schools, industrial homes, refuges, benevolent societies, sailors' societies, distressed widows, poor's boxes in the metropolitan police-courts, and any special disaster at home or abroad, whether it be an Indian famine or a Chicago fire, always calls into play the charitable instincts of this bountiful company. They endeavour faithfully to discharge the various trusts committed to their care, and to carry into effect the objects for which the Company was constituted. They duly provide for and assist those necessitous persons, their widows and children, who are fortunate enough to be members of the fraternity, and make liberal grants for the support of objects of general utility and national benefit. The Fishmongers have a noble record and honourable history. Time has not dimmed their power of usefulness nor checked the flow of their generous sympathy and charity.

## V

## THE GOLDSMITHS' COMPANY

LIKE the last Company which I have described—the Fishmongers’—the Goldsmiths still perform some useful and practical work in connection with the trade from which they derive their name. It can claim as ancient a lineage as any of its predecessors, and appears first in the page of history in the year 1180 amongst the other *adulterine* guilds, *i.e.*, guilds which existed without any licence from the king. At first it was entirely a voluntary association composed of goldsmiths, and had for its chief objects the protection of the mystery or craft of goldsmiths, and to guard against fraudulent workers; but it was evidently also formed for religious and social purposes, and for the relief of the poor members. In its earliest records we find entries of sums paid for such purposes as the keeping of the obits of deceased members, the providing of wax lights which were used in celebrating the obits, and were held by the almsfolk during such celebration, for ringing bells on St Dunstan's Day, and for the vestures of the chaplain, whose duty it was to say masses for the souls of deceased members. St Dunstan was the patron saint of the mystery, and the Company had a chapel of St Dunstan in St Paul's Cathedral. We also find in the early records entries of payments for feasts, the sum expended in 1367 on St Dunstan's feasts being £21, 8s. 9d., and of payments made to the poor. St Dunstan was worthy of his high position as patron saint of the guild, as he was himself a worker in precious metals. In the list of costly gold and silver vessels and jewels possessed by Edward I., mention is made of “a gold ring and a sapphire of the workmanship of St Dunstan.”

The early English goldsmiths were so skilful and their trade so important that it is not surprising that their Company ranks very high amongst the earliest London Trade Associations. Charters and important

## THE CITY COMPANIES

privileges were granted to them by the Sovereigns of England. Edward I. issued a statute, in 1300, which provides for the standards of gold and silver, and enacts that all articles of these metals shall be assayed by the wardens of the craft, to whom certain powers of search are also given. The first of the Company's Charters was granted to them by Edward III. (1327), whereby they were allowed to elect honest, lawful, and sufficient men, best skilled in the trade, to inquire of any matters of complaint, and who might, in due consideration of the craft, reform what defects they should find therein, and punish offenders. It states that it had been therefore ordained that all those who were of the goldsmith's trade should sit in their shops in the High Street of Cheap (Cheapside), and that no silver or plate, nor vessel of gold or silver, ought to be sold in the city of London, except at the King's Exchange, or in the said street of Cheap amongst the goldsmiths, and that publicly, to the end that persons of the said trade might inform themselves whether the sellers came lawfully by such vessel or not ; whereas of late not only the merchants and strangers brought counterfeit sterling into the realm, and also many of the trade of goldsmiths kept shops in obscure turnings and by-lanes and streets, but did buy vessels of gold and silver secretly, without inquiring whether such vessels were stolen or lawfully come by, and immediately melting it down did make it into plate and sell it to the merchants travelling beyond seas, that it might be exported ; and so they made false work of gold and silver, which they sold to those who had no skill in such things, which abuses and deceptions this Charter provides against by ordaining that no gold or silver shall be manufactured to be sent abroad but what shall be sold at the King's Exchange or openly amongst the goldsmiths, and that none pretending to be goldsmiths shall keep any shops but in the Cheap.

It appears from this Charter that the tricks of fraudulent artificers were ingenious. They covered tin so subtly that it could scarcely be distinguished from fine silver, and in bracelets, lockets, and rings they set glass of divers colours, cleverly counterfeiting genuine jewels. The recog-



*Hall of the Goldsmiths' Company*



## THE GOLDSMITHS' COMPANY

nised locality for the Goldsmiths was Cheapside, Old Change, Lombard Street, Foster Lane (where their hall still stands), Silver Street, Goldsmiths' Street, Wood Street, but there were many obscure turnings, by-lanes and streets in old London which favoured the designs of the nefarious craftsmen. The precincts of monasteries, which had the privilege of sanctuary, were their favourite resorts, and many curious stories do the records of the Company tell of the adventures of the searchers after these secret workers.

Many were the duties of the wardens of the Company. They fined workmen for making wares worse than standard, entered their shops, and searched for and seized false wares, settled disputes between masters and apprentices, and frequently punished rebellious apprentices by flogging, levied heavy fines upon members for slander and disobedience of the wardens, and for reviling members of the livery, and generally exercised a very powerful and absolute control, not only over the members of the fellowship, but also over all other persons exercising the goldsmiths' trade.

The Company and its members also acted as bankers and pawnbrokers. Many foreigners of the trade settled in England, and although efforts were frequently made to exclude them, on account of their skill they were allowed to remain and benefit the trade by their clever workmanship.

The records of the Company give curious illustrations of events in history, and of the manner and customs of our forefathers. In 1350 we find a graphic note of the effects of the Black Death, which carried off 50,000 persons in London alone. The note mentions some charitable donation to the poor, "because all the wardens were dead." Very splendid was the dress of the Company when they met Henry VI. and his Queen. Bawderykes of gold about their necks, with hangers and scarlet hoods, black hoods beaten with goldsmith's work, were some of the vestures. They mustered strongly to resist the Kentish men in the time of Richard III., fifty-six well-armed persons, each bringing one to five men-at-arms, besides seventy-three young men of the livery; and

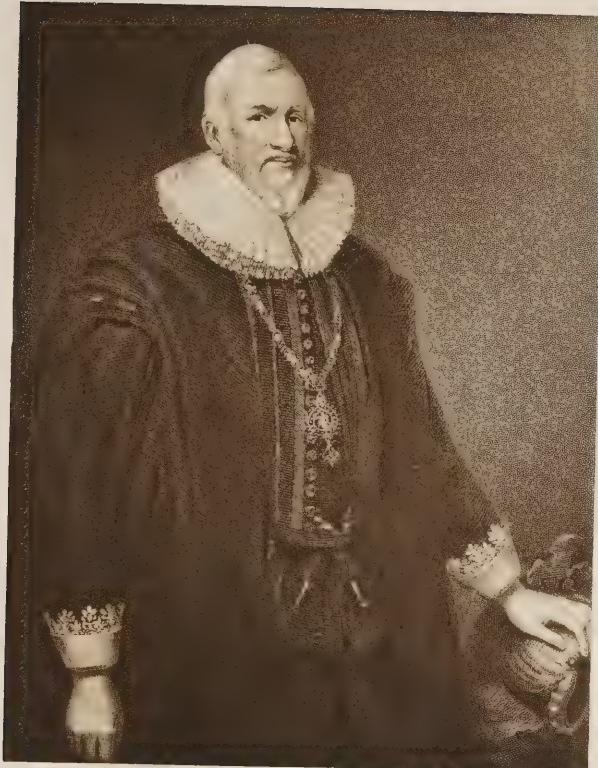
## THE CITY COMPANIES

since, in 1538, divers persons of light disposition, which studied to raise and bring up seditious, and untrue, and slanderous rumours, by order of the king they kept and observed night watches throughout the city. The same king, Henry VIII., found occasion against the Company to levy a heavy fine on them. They were accused of some fault in connection with their Assay Office—whether falsely or not we are unable to determine ; however, the king thought this too good an opportunity to be lost, and fined them 3000 marks.

At the Reformation the Goldsmiths bought back all the property which had been left for superstitious uses, and we find that a cup which bore the figure of their patron saint was melted, and 30s. is paid to an embroiderer for “amending the horse-cloth,” *i.e.*, removing some figures which might be thought to savour of superstition.

In the seventeenth century the absolute powers of the Company began to be questioned, and in 1738 they obtained an Act of Parliament for the purpose of regulating the trade, preventing fraud and bad workmanship, etc. The Company now carry on their important duties under more modern Acts of Parliament. They maintain an Assay Office for the purpose of assaying and marking plate. Every year the current coin of the realm is submitted to the Company for trial, and from the time of Edward I. to the present time the trial of the Pyx has been conducted by the Company, and secures the nation from the danger of a debased currency. Since 1900 the Pyx coins in the Colonial Mints (Perth, Sydney and Melbourne) have been included in the trials.

Among the distinguished members of this distinguished Company we find the names of Sir Nicholas Faringdon (Mayor in 1308), Sir Dru Barentyn (refounder of the hall in 1410, and Lord Mayor), Sir Martin Bowes (Master of the Mint in the reign of Elizabeth), Sir Hugh Myddelton (the founder of the New River), Sir Francis Child (Lord Mayor in 1699, founder of the great firm of bankers), Sir Charles Duncombe, Sir James Pemberton, Sir Robert Vyner, and many others.



*Sir Hugh Middleton.  
from a Print in the British Museum.*



## THE GOLDSMITHS' COMPANY

*Hall and Treasures.*—The Company have never strayed far from their ancestral home. About the year 1350 they acquired the site upon which their magnificent hall now stands, and possessed then a building where they held their meetings and feasts. Their second hall was probably built by Sir Dru Barentyn in 1407, and consisted of a parlour, chapel, a chamber, armoury, granary, gallery, assay office, vaults, courtyard or garden, and an entrance gate-house. Various entries in the accounts of the Company show that the chambers were handsomely furnished. The hall screen was surmounted by a silver-gilt statue of St Dunstan, which fell a victim to iconoclastic zeal at the Reformation, and was furnished with rich hangings, representing the history of the saint, which were expressly fashioned for the purpose in Flanders. The accounts of the feasts which took place in this ancient hall are numerous and curious, and very splendid and substantial was the entertainment provided. The dinner on St Dunstan's Day, A.D. 1518, consisted of eight dozen chickens, four and a half dozen geese, two dozen capons, six herons, and numerous quails, rabbits, pigeons, eggs. The first course contained "conger eels, turbot, lampreys, and salmon," and the butcher provided "surloyne of beef, mutton, veal, marrowbones, lambs, ribbs of beef, and a neat's tongue." Ale, red wine, claret, and malmsey were the chief drinks.

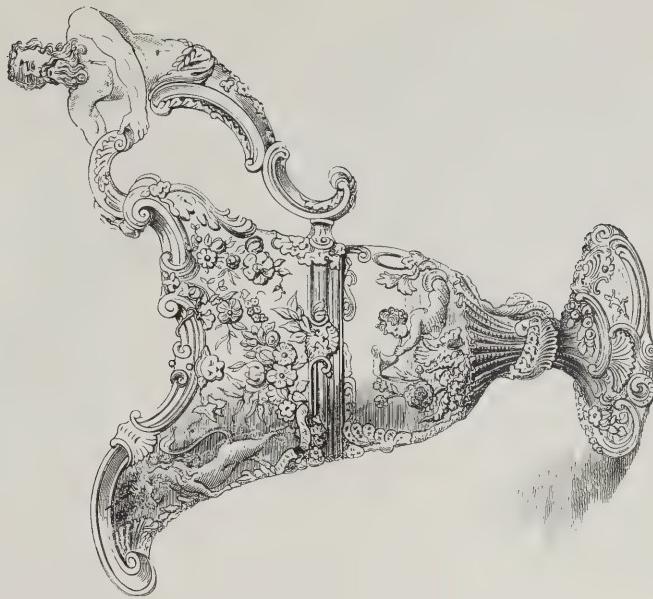
During the rule of the Roundheads, Goldsmiths' Hall was used as the Exchequer, in which was stored all money amassed by the forfeiture of the estates of unhappy Royalists. The Great Fire reduced the hall to ruins, but Sir Charles Doe prudently removed the books of the Company for safety to a house at Edmonton. Temporary premises were secured in Grub Street for the use of the Company, and they began by degrees to repair their old hall, the new walls being built on the old foundations. Mr Jarman, who must have profited largely by the fire, was the architect. In order to carry out the work, the Company were obliged to sell their plate. The following is a description of the hall:—

The buildings were of a fine red brick, and surrounded a small square court, paved, the front being ornamented with stone corners wrought in

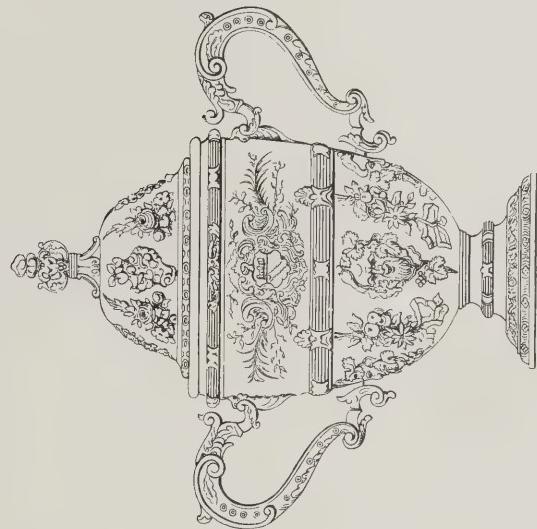
## THE CITY COMPANIES

rustic, and a large arched entrance, which exhibited a high pediment, supported on Doric columns, and open at the top to give room for a shield of the Company's arms. The livery, or common hall, on the east of the court, was a spacious and lofty apartment, paved with black and white marble, and very elegantly fitted up. The wainscoting was very handsome, and the ceiling richly stuccoed. A richly-carved screen, a balustrade with vases, and a beaufet with gold and white ornaments formed part of the embellishments of this splendid room. The balustrade of the staircase was elegantly carved, and the walls exhibited numerous relief of scrolls, flowers, and musical instruments. The court-room was richly wainscoted, and had a sumptuous chimneypiece of statuary marble.

This building was replaced in 1835 by the present palatial edifice, which is, perhaps, the most imposing of all the Company's halls. A magnificent marble staircase leads from the ground floor, monolith pillars support the roof, and a bust of the founder of the Company, Edward III., faces the entrance. Two fine sculptures by Storey, the Libyan Sibyl and Cleopatra, adorn the vestibule. The hall itself is a splendid building, and has been newly decorated. The court-room is wainscoted with oak panelling taken from the old hall. It contains a painting of St Dunstan, the original grant of arms to Sir Hugh Myddelton, a portrait of the same worthy (1644), and also of Sir Thomas Vyner, Sir Martyn Bowes, three times Lord Mayor, and a bust of Walter Prideaux, Esq., who occupied for thirty years the honourable post of Clerk of the Company, and who was succeeded by his son, Sir Walter Sherburne Prideaux, the present clerk. This room contains also some most perfect specimens of modern art, a magnificent silver vase and shield by Vechte, which were exhibited at the Exhibition of 1851. Not the least interesting of the contents of the court-room is a small Roman altar, discovered while the foundations of the hall were being laid. It has the honour of being mentioned in the *Ingoldsby Legends*, in the "Lay of St Dunstan," for, in the words of the bard,—



EWER, 1741  
At Goldsmiths' Hall



TWO-HANDED CUP AND COVER  
At Goldsmiths' Hall



## THE GOLDSMITHS' COMPANY

"Of course, you have read that St Dunstan was bred  
A goldsmith, and never quite gave up the trade !  
The Company—richest in London, 'tis said—  
Acknowledge him still as their Patron and Head."

At the end of the lay we read :—

"In Goldsmiths' Hall there's a handsome glass case,  
And in it a stone figure found on the place,  
When, thinking the old hall no longer a pleasant one,  
They pulled it all down and erected the present one.  
If you look you'll perceive that this stone figure twists  
A thing like a broomstick in one of its fists.  
It's so injured by time you can't make out a feature ;  
But it is not St Dunstan, so doubtless it's Peter."

The logical conclusion is, of course, evident to all. In an adjoining room is a collection of antique silver, Elizabethan chalices, an almost unique collection of Apostles' spoons, the ancient badge of the Company's barge-master, and other objects of interest. The plate of the Company is very fine, and includes Queen Elizabeth's cup, used by Her Majesty at her coronation, magnificent salt cellars, a helmet cup, and candelabra from the Duke of Buckingham's collection at Stow, made from designs by Flaxman. In one of the rooms there is a painting, historically interesting, representing seven worthies who had been Lord Mayors of London, drinking in secret the health of the Pretender in the year 1752.

At the back of the hall is the Assay Office, where goods made of silver or gold are tested and receive the hall mark. The whole process is extremely interesting. The greatest care is exercised in testing the goods entrusted to the Company, and so admirable are the arrangements of the office, that there can be no possibility of collusion, fraud, or error in this important department of the Company's work, and the public are assured that any article which bears the hall mark is perfectly genuine.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

*Income, Charities and Expenditure.*—The whole income of the Company amounted, at the date of the Livery Companies' Commission in 1884, to £54,000 ; of this sum £11,000 is Trust Income, and £43,000 is the amount of their Corporate Funds. We shall now proceed to show what good use the Goldsmiths make of the large sums of money placed at their disposal, and how numerous are the good works which they support.

The only Church patronage which the Company have is that of St Dunstan, East Acton, which church was entirely built and endowed at the expense of the Company. It was built in 1877, and together with the parsonage has cost £19,292. Besides this munificent gift they have endowed the living with an income of £500. They contribute about £400 a year to the building and repairing of churches and chapels.

One Philip Strelley left two exhibitions of £5 at Oxford or Cambridge in charge of the Company. These they have augmented, and founded no less than seventy-six exhibitions of £50, which are awarded solely by competition, modified by consideration of the needs of the student and his parents or friends.

With regard to schools, the annual amount which the Company are bound as trustees to expend for educational purposes is under £100 a year. By the will of Sir Edmund Shaa they have to contribute £10 to a school at Stockport ; by the will of Sir Bartholomew Read, £10 to a school at Cromer ; by the will of John Perryn, £20 to a grammar school at Bromyard ; and by the will of John Fox, £10 to a school at Dean, Cumberland. That is all that the Company is obliged to do by their trust deeds. We will now see what they have done and are doing in this direction.

In 1830 they built schoolhouses at Stockport, in order to make the old grammar school a large and important institution, at a cost of £9000. The annual cost of the school then amounted to £500 a year. This had increased to £1000 in 1859, and the total outlay then amounted to £30,000. They then presented the school to the Corporation of Stock-

## THE GOLDSMITHS' COMPANY



GOLDSMITHS' COMPANY.—ALMSHOUSES, ACTON PARK.

port, and agreed to endow it with £300 a year, which sum has been paid ever since. Instead of giving only £10 a year, which they are bound by their trust to do, they give £300 a year. They have enlarged the school at Bromyard, and for many years gave £400 per annum instead of only £10 charged upon Perryn's estate. This estate has recently increased in value, and the Company is now enabled to contribute to the school funds from this charity, instead of drawing so largely on their corporate funds. When the school was remodelled recently they presented it with the capital sum of £10,000 as an endowment. Similarly the school at Cromer was maintained by the Company until recently at a cost of £400 a year, in lieu of the £10 given by Sir B. Read; but this school has now been replaced by a public elementary school. They give also £200 a year for exhibitions to the students at Girton and Newnham.

The Company originally had several almshouses ; the principal ones

## THE CITY COMPANIES

being at Woolwich, for five widows of that place ; Perryn's Almshouses at Acton, upon which in 1812 they spent £12,000 ; and Morell's Almshouses, at Hackney. The almshouses at Woolwich and Hackney have now been discontinued, and out-pensions have been established in their place. An examination of the return of the charities shows that four-fifths of the trust income is applicable to the poor of the Company ; but the annual amount expended for the relief of poor freemen, and poor widows and daughters of freemen, is considerably in excess of the income applicable for these objects. A large number of the freemen belong to the artisan class, and become objects of the bounty of the Company in consequence of sickness, age, and want of employment. No deserving member, no deserving widow or daughter of a freeman, falls into poverty or decay without receiving pecuniary assistance, and it is satisfactory to learn that the number of applications for relief diminishes each year. This is a welcome sign that the poverty of industrious artisans is becoming less, and the charitable funds placed in the hands of the Company will ultimately give them additional power for carrying on their vast schemes for the amelioration of the condition of the working classes, and for the promotion of education.

With regard to the promotion of technical education, the Goldsmiths' Company have taken the foremost place among the supporters of the movement, and it is our pleasant task to record the accomplishment of a work which is without parallel, even amongst the many great achievements of the Guilds of the City of London in the interests of the country's welfare.

The Goldsmiths' Company was one of the Companies which combined to establish the City and Guilds of London Institute for the advancement of Technical Education twenty-three years ago, and they have from the first liberally supported this Institute. They have taken a leading part in the management of its several branches, whilst through their private funds they have contributed more than any other City Company to the resources of the Institution. The Company's con-



*Sir Martin Bowes,  
from a Print in the British Museum.*



## THE GOLDSMITHS' COMPANY

tribution to this Institute, from its commencement to the present date, amounts to over £115,000, and their fixed annual subscription is £4000. The work carried on by this Institute at the Central Technical College, South Kensington, at the Finsbury College, at the South London School of Art at Kennington, and by means of its Technological Examinations, is well-known.

In addition to their grants to the above Institute, the Goldsmiths' Company have, during the past eighteen years, contributed between £5000 and £6000 in support of other existing institutions in the metropolis where technical education is given.

The Goldsmiths' Company have also, at their own cost, established and endowed their Technical and Recreative Institute at New Cross. The expenditure of the Company upon the site, buildings and equipment amounts, to the present date, to upwards of £100,000, and the Company have assigned an endowment of £5000 per annum.

It will be seen, therefore, that during the past twenty-three years the Goldsmiths' Company have expended nearly £220,000 for the promotion of Technical Education in the metropolis, while they are still pledged to an annual expenditure for the same purpose of not less than £9000.

The establishment of the Technical and Recreative Institute at New Cross is worthy of special mention. The cost of founding and endowing the Institute is so great, the arrangements for the benefit of those who attend it are so complete, the building so magnificently equipped for the purpose, that the whole undertaking is almost unique in the history of the development of such institutions. The young men and women of the industrial and artisan classes here receive technical instruction combined with opportunities for recreation and bodily exercises, which must prove to be of the greatest possible benefit to them both mentally and physically. It was at first proposed that the Charity Commissioners should assist in the undertaking, but in 1889 the Company

## THE CITY COMPANIES

assumed the entire cost of founding and endowing the Institute. This work has been of considerable magnitude and difficulty, and has entailed a capital expenditure of not less than £100,000. If to this sum be added the capital value of the endowment of £5000, the total cost to the Company will represent a capital of more than a quarter of a million of money, and this sum is provided solely out of their private resources, over which they have free and unfettered control. The building which they have adapted for the purpose was the Royal Naval School at New Cross. The central court has been roofed over, and forms an admirable concert-hall of immense size. There are lecture-rooms without number, where classes are held in engineering, chemistry, art, etc. There are laboratories for the study of electricity and chemistry; engineers' shops, libraries, a swimming-bath, class-rooms for needlework and cookery, photographic studios, gymnasium, and everything that the wit of man could devise for the instruction and recreation of the people. That the Institute is appreciated by those who are fortunate enough to be able to make use of the advantages it offers is shown by the fact that over 8000 class entries have been recorded in one year.

The grants made by the Company annually for hospitals, dispensaries and charitable institutions of that kind are large and numerous, and they also contribute largely to the benefit and provident societies connected with the gold and silver trade.

The Company's Queen Victoria Commemoration Charity was founded in commemoration of the completion of the sixtieth year of the reign of Her late Majesty Queen Victoria, and was endowed with the sum of £20,000 from the Company's corporate property. The object of the Charity is the relief of deserving and necessitous working goldsmiths and silversmiths *not being free of the Company*.

The improvement of the dwellings of the poor has long been an object for which philanthropists have sighed. The Company recognised the need, and, with their accustomed bounty, decided ten years ago to

## THE GOLDSMITHS' COMPANY

make a grant of £25,000 to the Guinness Trustees for the purpose of improved dwellings for the poorer classes of workmen engaged in the several branches of the trade with which the Company is intimately associated. These dwellings have been erected in Clerkenwell, where many working goldsmiths reside. No greater benefit could be conferred on them than this, and the Company is to be congratulated upon the conception of this bountiful scheme, which shows not only their generosity but the wisdom which guides their benevolence.

## VI

## THE MERCHANT TAYLORS' COMPANY

A CELEBRATED controversy for precedence between the Taylors and Skinners arose in 1484, and caused much contention. It was finally settled by the Lord Mayor, who assigned the precedence to each Company in alternate years, and in order that past differences might be forgotten it was arranged that each Company should invite the other to dinner once every year. As this year of grace, 1904, is the year for the Merchant Taylors to take the lead, it is manifestly my duty to treat of their records first before I enter upon the investigation of the history and good works of their famous brethren, the Skinners.

The history of the Merchant Taylors' Company has been exhaustively treated by Mr Clode in his *Memorials of the Merchant Taylors' Company*; it will be seen that they have ever been devoted to good works—amongst which Church work has always occupied a distinguished place. From the early period of their history to the present day the Company have ever shown themselves to be an earnest and religious body, true patrons of learning and helpers of the poor.

History does not narrate the date of the foundation of the Company, but the fact that a serious affray between them and the Goldsmiths occurred in 1267 shows that they can claim as ancient an origin as most of the other companies. In the time of Edward I. they received the title of "Taylors and Linen Armourers of the Fraternity of St John the Baptist," and it appears that the members were engaged in manufacturing everything pertaining to armour, including the linings, surcoats, caparisons and accoutrements, royal pavilions and robes of state, tents for the soldiers, as well as ordinary garments and wardrobe requirements, except only the actual metal work. They were large dealers in cloth which

## THE MERCHANT TAYLORS' COMPANY

came from the Flemish looms, and have ever taken a prominent part in the development of English commercial enterprise. By the Charter of Henry VII., A.D. 1502, the title of "Merchant" before that of "Taylors" was conferred.

Certain honest and lawful men of the mystery in early times formed a guild for religious and charitable purposes, which was granted a licence by Edward I. It was governed by a master, who was called "the Pilgrim," as travelling for the whole body, and four wardens, the purveyors of alms or quarterages. These titles show that the Fraternity was, at an early period, engaged in religious and charitable work, and their earliest Charter, granted to them by Edward III. in 1326, proves that the guild also concerned itself with the regulation of trade. In applying for their Charter, they stated that they had been accustomed, "from the time whereof there was no memory," to hold their guild once a year, to govern their mysteries and to settle the state of their servants; and, under this Charter, it was enacted that no one was allowed to hold a shop of the mysteries within the City unless free of the Company, nor should any one be made free of the Company "unless vouched by honest and lawful men of the mysteries that he was honest, faithful, and fit for the same." A very early ordinance shows that their trade then related rather to the furnishing of armour than of apparel, and states that, in order to prevent worthless and unserviceable armour being covered, no smith might himself cover any basnet for sale, but should sell them quite new and uncovered. An ordinance was framed in 1371 for the purpose of recovering damages from workmen miscutting the cloth entrusted to them, imposing certain fines, which were partly devoted to the maintenance of a priest and the support of the poor. Already a chapel at the north side of St Paul's, in honour of St John the Baptist, had been granted to the Company for daily service and prayers, "for the preservation of them that are or shall be of the Fraternity." In 1455 Pope Calixtus III. granted permission for the celebration of Mass on the altar in the chapel of Taylors' Hall.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

Subsequent Charters were granted to the Company by Richard II. in 1390, Henry IV. in 1407, Henry VI. in 1439, Edward IV. in 1465, and Henry VII. in 1502. As in the case of other Companies, the Taylors enjoyed a monopoly of their trade; no one could set up a shop without having a licence from the Company, and they had the right of search, which was a guarantee to the public that the honest usages of the trade were observed, and to the Company that their monopoly was not infringed. Every year, while Bartholomew Fair lasted, the beadle of the Company attended with his silver yard measure to test the measures used by the sellers of cloth in that great assembly of traders.

A grant of arms was made to the Company, then denoted as "the Taylors and Armourers of London," by Sir Thomas Holmes in 1480. Several entries in the Company's books are interesting, and describe the manners of the times and reflect the stirring scenes of our country's history. In 1563 the Company did not meet, as many members had left the city, "for avoiding the infection and sickness of the plague, that so sore continueth amongst us: which God, for His Christ's sake, cure it, and withdraw His heavy wrath from us." They took a prominent part in the shows and pageants which delighted the worthy citizens of London in the days when good Queen Bess ruled o'er English land. In 1567 they provided "at the muster and show, on Midsummer Eve, twelve persons with comely cressets, with good sufficient lights for the same, and cresset-bearers with straw hats upon their heads, having the Company's arms, on the assembling at Leadenhall;" and at the Queen's May-day festivities they were ordered to provide 188 armed men for the show. The cost of the entertainments was a heavy burden upon the resources of the Company, and we find that the visit of James I. to Merchant Taylors' Hall entailed an expenditure of no less than £1000.

The Stuart kings, by their forced loans, impoverished the Company. In 1620 they were obliged to sell some of their plate, and in 1640 to provide a supply of ammunition for the use of the City, and £5000 for the

## THE MERCHANT TAYLORS' COMPANY

support of the King's northern army. The maintaining the honour of the Company was always a duty recognised by the Court, and to this intent they were always careful that their riders at the pageants should be well harnessed and apparelled in the best array, and that the public appearance of the gentlemen of the livery should be always imposing. This was especially the case when in 1641 Charles I. returned from Scotland and was entertained by the City at Guildhall. This was the last honour the citizens paid their luckless King. Then followed the troubles of the Civil War period, when soldiers were quartered in the Company's hall, and many expressions of joy were uttered when, by a special order of General Fairfax, Merchant Taylors' Hall was freed from these troublesome guests. The Company took a prominent part in the rejoicings which attended the Restoration. Their buildings were greatly damaged by the Great Fire, and the arbitrary proceedings of Charles II. affected their liberties and welfare in conjunction with the other Companies.

At the close of the Great Rebellion the State was indebted to the Company in the large sum of £24,731. No part of this money was repaid until 1668, when the Company received £2250, and this was the only portion of the principal ever received from the Crown. We will conclude this survey of the fortunes of this ancient corporation with two verses extracted from a ballad entitled, "A Delightful Song of the Four Famous Feasts of England, one of them ordained by King Henry VII. to the honour of the Merchant Taylors, showing how seven kings have been free of that Company, and how, lastly, it was graced with the renowned Henry of Great Britain :"—

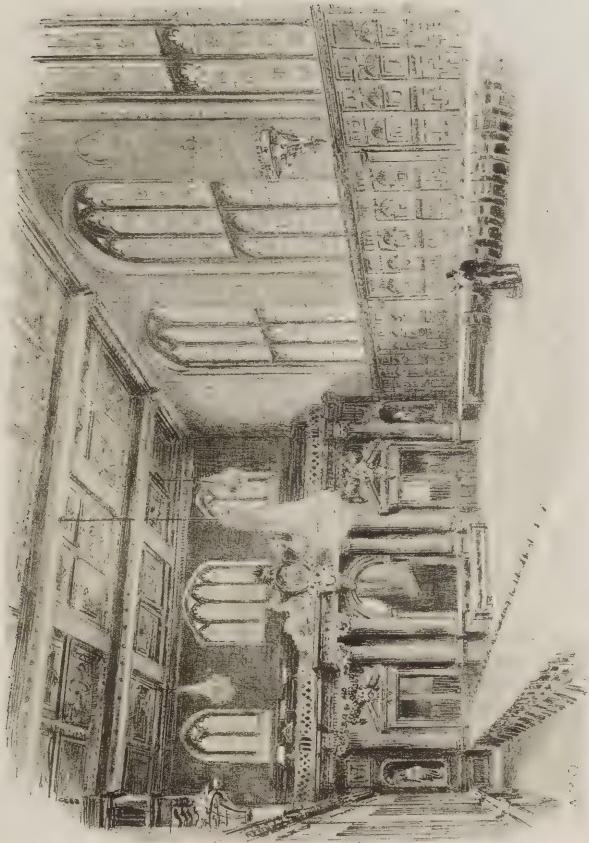
"The Merchant Taylors' Company,  
The fellowship of fame,  
To London's lasting dignity,  
Lives honoured with the same.  
A gift King Henry the Seventh gave,  
Kept once in three years still,  
When gold and gowns be to poor men  
Given by King Henrie's will.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

Then let all London Companies,  
So highly in renown,  
Give Merchant Taylors name and fame  
To wear the laurel crown ;  
For seven of England's royal kings  
Thereof have all been free,  
And with their loves and favours grac'd  
This worthy Company."

*Hall and Treasures.*—The hall of the Company stands in Threadneedle Street, which evidently derives its name from that circumstance. They acquired this site in 1331, and previous to that date they had premises in Basing Lane, behind the "Red Lion," in Cordwainer Street Ward. Birch Lane was the original locality of the Taylors, where, according to the legend, the Devil, accompanied by Pride, once visited them, expecting a friendly greeting ; but he was so severely handled by the linen-armourers and their apprentices with their Spanish needles that he beat an ignominious retreat.

The new hall, acquired in 1331, was occupied by Sir Oliver de Ingham, a gallant soldier who defended Bordeaux against Philip of France, and died there in 1344. It was owned by a worshipful gentleman named Edmund Crepin, who for a certain sum of money granted it to John of Yakeslee, the King's pavilion-maker, who purchased it on behalf of the Company. The property was enlarged by the gift of the Oteswich family, who granted to the Company the advowson of the Church of St Martin Outwich (or Oteswich) and certain shops for the benefit of the poor brethren and sisters. In fulfilment of this trust, the Company built their almshouses at the west end of the parish church, and attached to them a new hall. It was a high building, consisting of a ground floor and three upper stories. The almshouses, seven in number, were built about "a proper quadrant or square court." The interior of the hall was adorned with costly tapestry representing the history of St John Baptist, and a silver image of the saint adorned the screen. Armorial bearings appeared in the windows, the floor was strewn with rushes, silk banners



*The Hall of the Merchant Taylors' Company.*



## THE MERCHANT TAYLORS' COMPANY

hung from the ceilings, and on feast days glittering plate adorned the rude tables placed on tressels.

A garden with alleys and a terrace was at the rear of the hall, and in it stood the Treasury, in which the plate and other valuables were stored ; and conspicuous amongst the other buildings was the King's Chamber, set apart and well furnished for the reception of royal guests, who frequently honoured the Company with their presence. This chamber was rebuilt in 1593, and in 1601 £50 was granted for a new carpet. They possessed a magnificent store of plate, and a well-equipped armoury. In 1621 it was resolved that the most convenient place for the storage of gunpowder would be over the banqueting-hall in the garden ! At various periods the hall itself was repaired and decorated. It was wainscoted in 1620 boarded in 1631, and paved with red tiles in 1646.

After the fire 200 pounds of melted plate was recovered, and sold for the purpose of restoring the hall, which was gradually accomplished and completed in 1671, and the rest of the buildings were subsequently added. These have been restored and redecorated at various times, and after the expenditure of much wealth the hall of the Merchant Taylors has become one of the most splendid edifices of the kind in London. It is well described by Mr Hazlitt as being “old-fashioned, ample, and sumptuous.”

The present hall has two entrances in Threadneedle Street. Using that to the west, you enter a vestibule and passage, having on the left side marble busts of eminent men, whose names are placed on the pedestals. At the foot of the staircase stands a bronze statue of St John Baptist, the patron saint of the Company, from the original in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence. Ascending the stairs, you have on the right a large piece of Flemish tapestry, framed, representing a villa and garden scene, which has been in the Company's possession since 1613. On the other sides are portraits of George III. and his queen (Charlotte), by Allan Ramsay or Sir Thomas Lawrence.

Upon the landing are marble busts of other members, including Generals Sir George Pollock and Sir Frederick Roberts, and the Earl of

## THE CITY COMPANIES

Beaconsfield. Turning to the left, you enter the corridor and overlook the hall, which is eighty-two feet in length by forty-three feet in width and in height, and has all the characteristics of a hall of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; from the corridor, or Lady's Chamber—above the daïs—you see the recess for the buffet, the floor or Marsh, the screen, with the Minstrels' Gallery over it. The windows, with stained glass, have thereon the arms of former members (who in this case were benefactors to the Guild), beginning with Thomas Sibsey in 1404-5, John Churchman (1405), Peter Mason (1412), and following down to a later date.

The various uses to which the hall has been applied may be very briefly referred to. Foreign ambassadors, with their attendants, have been lodged in it, and, by the legislation of Henry VII., the common hall of every Guild was made the place where both natives and foreigners had to assemble to hear published the decrees of the Star Chamber relating to their trade. The affairs of the Guild were there conducted, and from the daïs justice was administered by the master and wardens amongst the members, and that the time of suitors "attending in the hall for the hearing of their causes" might not pass unprofitably away, "the Master and Wardens decreed," on the 30th of October 1578, "that the Bible in the new form (which was Parker's or the Bishop's Bible), then lately printed by Christopher Barker, should be bought and set up in their common hall."

The annual elections of the Master and wardens were held there, and Henry VII., according to Strype, attended that of 1506, and was present at the great annual feast of the Company held on the Nativity of St John Baptist. Until 1502 the Lord Mayor's feast of St Simon and St Jude was held in alternate years in the hall, and in 1607 James I. and his son Prince Henry were entertained there. Since 1676-7 the Sons of the Clergy, after the annual festival, have dined in the hall.

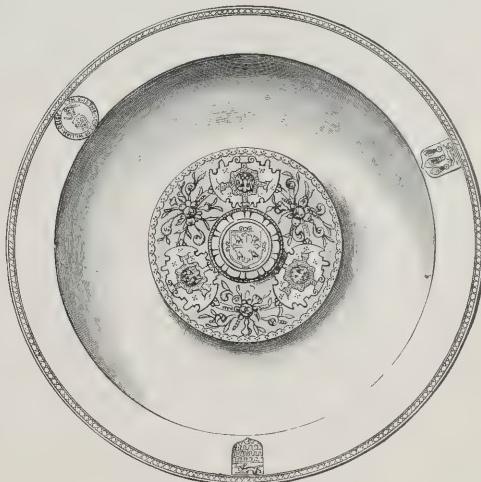
In the corridor overlooking the hall the objects most deserving attention are two hearse-cloths of Italian fabric, which were used in earlier



SALVER, Early Seventeenth Century  
At Merchant Taylors' Hall



IRISH TANKARD, 1680  
At Merchant Taylors' Hall



SILVER BASIN, 1590  
At Merchant Taylors' Hall



## THE MERCHANT TAYLORS' COMPANY

days at the burial of a brother of the mysterie. That to the left hand dates about 1490 to 1512 ; the other, 1520-30.

As to the pictures, the first to be noticed is a portrait of Henry VIII., reputed to be by Paris Bordone, and then a picture of St John Baptist; after that the portraits of Wellington, Eldon, and the Duke of York, and one of the younger Pitt by Hoppner, given to the Company by the Pitt Club. In the drawing-room there are two portraits by Kneller (Charles II. and James II.) and two by Thomas Murray of King William and Mary.

Descending the staircase, you enter the small dining-room. Over the fireplace is a portrait of Charles I. by a pupil of Vandyke, and on the sides portraits of Charles II. (artist unknown) and of three former clerks of the Company ; that of George North being by Thomas Hudson, the master of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

Passing through the door at the end of the room, you enter a library, which, with the other rooms and the corridor in the basement, forming the three sides of the quadrangle, were designed by the late Edward l'Anson, Esq., President R.I.B.A. In the windows are seen the ancient seal (1502) of the Company ; a portrait of Sir Thomas White, a member of the Company, and the founder of St John's College, Oxford ; and the arms of six school founders who were members of the Company, Sir John Percyvale and his wife (1485), Sir S. Jenyns (1490), Sir Thomas White (1553), Sir William Harper (1553), Richard Hilles (1562), and John Harrison (1593). Amongst the books is the Bible of 1611, which formerly stood in the hall chained to the lectern.

In the court-room the higher lights of the windows are filled in with stained glass. The central windows contain the arms of former members, namely (beginning from the left) :—

John Churchman, benefactor in 1405 ; Sir W. Fitzwilliam, Master in 1499, the founder of the present Earl's family ; Sir W. Craven, 1615, Warden in 1593, the founder of Earl Craven's family ; Sir John Gore, Warden in 1611, from whom four peerages are traced ; John Vernon, Master in 1609 ; and Robert Dowe, Master in 1578. In this room there

## THE CITY COMPANIES

are portraits of Sir Thomas White, Master about 1535, and Robert Dowe, Master in 1578 (both owned by the Company since 1609); of Sir Thomas Rowe, Master about 1557; John Vernon, Master in 1609; Robert Gray, Warden in 1628; Walter Pell, Master in 1649; and Sir A. Reynardson, Master in 1640, who, as Lord Mayor in 1648, refused to proclaim in Cheapside and the Exchange the order of the Commons of March 17th, "for abolishing the King's office," and, when summoned to the Bar of the House, pleaded his oath of allegiance. He was, however, degraded, fined, and imprisoned in the Tower for two months, but he adhered to his oath.

There are also three portraits by Sir Godfrey Kneller, of former Masters, namely, Alderman Sir P. Ward (1671), Alderman Sir W. Pritchard (1673), and Alderman Sir W. Turner (1685).

In the ante-room to the court-room there is a picture representing Henry VII. delivering the Charter to the Master and Wardens, and two Dutch landscapes, attributed to Roland Savery and John Breughel.

Passing through the iron gates you come to the eastern entrance to the hall. The door to the right leads to the buildings now used for kitchen offices, but they deserve attention. Descending the stairs you reach, on the left, what might have been the surface of the outer street when the crypt was built. It is some twelve feet below the street level. The materials of the walls are chalk and ragstone. The vaulting is simple, divided by arched ribs and crossing from side to side in three divisions, which are again crossed by diagonal ribs crossing from the same impost. The points of intersection are without bosses. The imposts consist of corbels formed of grotesque heads sustaining rectangular capitals. It might have been the cloister from the street to the chapel. Pope Calixtus granted the Company in 1455 the right to use a chapel in St Martin's parish, and the building under notice may have been such.

A few words may be added as to the Company's plate and records. The fire of 1666, after doing some havoc to the hall, was stayed on the

## THE MERCHANT TAYLORS' COMPANY



MERCHANT TAYLORS' COMPANY.—THE KITCHEN CRYPT.

premises, but the plate was almost all melted. Some was saved, as the Master's mace, the silver yard, by which for some centuries the London cloth measures were corrected, and two rose-water dishes of the later Tudor reign.

As to the records, all the Charters from Edward III. to the latest date, the grant of arms, the account books from 1399, the Court records from 1562, and all the Company's deeds were saved.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

*Income, Charities and Expenditure.*—To enumerate all the good works of the Merchant Taylors would require many pages, and I can only mention the principal objects which are benefited by their munificence. The whole income of the Company amounts to £50,000 ; of this amount £13,000 constitute their Trust Income, and £37,000 belong to their Corporate Funds. It will be seen how carefully they administer the revenues which pious benefactors have entrusted to them, and to what good purpose they apply the large funds over which they exercise control.

The Company began to establish their reputation as true patrons of learning as early as 1561, when, “for the better education and bringing up of children in good manners and literature, they erected a school within the parish of St Lawrence Pountney, in London ; and also meet and convenient lodgings for a schoolmaster and three ushers to inhabit and dwell in.” Six years previously, in anticipation of the foundation of the Merchant Taylors’ School, Sir Thomas White, a member of the Company, founded St John’s College, Oxford, reserving forty-three out of its fifty endowed fellowships for scholars from the school. The history of the school is a history of the munificence of the Company. It has no endowment, and is supported entirely out of the corporate funds of the Company, and the very distinguished position which it occupies among the great schools of England must be very gratifying to them. The school was originally intended for the accommodation of 250 boys. There are now 520, and in 1891 it held the first rank of all the schools in England in regard to the number of scholarships gained, and in 1892 its position was very nearly the same. Within recent years the school migrated from its ancient position to the buildings formerly occupied by the Charterhouse School. In 1867 the site was purchased at a net cost of £37,000, which large sum was provided out of the Company’s corporate funds. In 1875 the new buildings were completed at a cost of £53,000 and opened by the Prince and Princess of Wales. The school is supported entirely by the Company, out of their corporate funds, at a cost of several thousands a year.

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Another school governed and maintained by the Company is one at Great Crosby, near Liverpool, which was founded in 1618, by John Harrison, for 100 boys. In 1878 the Company erected a large, handsome building, surrounded by ten acres of playground, for the accommodation of 200 scholars. The cost of this was over £17,000, of which the Company advanced £5000 on loan at interest, and £9000 without interest, to be repaid when the funds of the school will admit of it. The school is rapidly developing; in ten years (1870-80) the Company expended upon it £30,000, and it was enlarged in 1893. Now there are 300 boys attending the school, which is again being enlarged. It is a very good middle-class school. A very successful girls' school has recently been opened, which is attended by 150 girls, and has in every way answered the expectations of the Company, and been of immense service to the inhabitants of Great Crosby.

In 1875 they spent £1000 in building their new elementary school at Ashwell, in Hertfordshire, which is mainly supported out of their corporate funds.

With regard to the University, the Company have the right to present to twenty-one scholarships at St John's College, Oxford, which are given to scholars proceeding from Merchant Taylors' School to that college. These are part of the bequest of Sir Thomas White, and are of the value of £100 per annum, tenable for seven years. There are also five Civil Law scholarships of £86 each, founded by Dr John Andrew for scholars proceeding from Merchant Taylors' School to St John's College. The Company have also several other exhibitions, which are in all cases given to youths leaving the Company's school for the universities. They also give £1000 a year in supplementing exhibitions at the University. This is given to youths from Merchant Taylors' School who obtain scholarships under £100 a year. Technical education has also received the support of the Company, as they contribute to the City and Guilds of London Institute no less than £2000 per annum. It is somewhat amusing to a philosophical observer of the manners and doings of municipal bodies to

## THE CITY COMPANIES

notice the discourteous demands of the London County Council with regard to this object. Some of the members of that august body had the effrontery to order the City Companies to contribute more largely out of their own private funds for the support of technical education. The readers of these pages will know that years before the County Council was born, or thought of, the City Companies were the pioneers of the movement. When they began their Institute there were no technical teachers ; they had to train instructors, and spent of their own accord for the good of their country thousands of pounds in promoting the work. As we have seen, one Company alone has spent a quarter of a million on one technical school. The Merchant Taylors are spending £2000 a year. We have seen the noble sacrifices of the Drapers' Company. And yet this modern Council has the boldness to suggest that they are not satisfied with the Companies' work, and to demand (as an after-thought their *demands* were softened into *requests*) increased supplies ! Verily the ways and manners of County Councillors are peculiar !

We have now recorded the good works of the Merchant Taylors with regard to education. The Company possess the patronage of some important benefices. The most important of their ancient parishes was that of St Martin Outwich, but that church has now ceased to exist, and the Company have made very excellent use of the large endowments attached to the benefice, and conferred great benefits on the Church by their wise action. Under a scheme prepared by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, which received the sanction of Her Most Gracious Majesty in Council at Windsor in 1873, the benefices of St Helen, Bishopgate, and St Martin Outwich, were united, and from that time St Helen's Church became the parish church of the united parishes, the site of St Martin's was sold, and the materials removed, the principal monuments being transferred to St Helen's.

Out of the surplus revenues derived from the sale of the site three new ecclesiastical districts were created, viz., Christ Church, Stepney, in the gift of the Bishop of London; Holy Trinity, Dalston ; and St

## THE MERCHANT TAYLORS' COMPANY

Peter's, Limehouse, in the gift of the Company. New churches have been built, and endowments provided, and the bountiful Company have devoted large sums out of their corporate funds to carry out the scheme. Thus a very large and important work of Church extension in the thickly populated and poor part of London has been successfully accomplished.

The interesting Church of St Helen, Bishopgate, has been restored, and to this work the Company gave £3500. It is not often that benefices have such bountiful patrons. The church was connected with the Priory of St Helen, founded by William the Goldsmith in 1212. The oldest portions of the present church belong to the thirteenth century, and the monuments are very numerous, beautiful, and historically interesting. The Company had also a lectureship attached to the Church of St Magnus, London Bridge, until it passed under the control of the City of London Parochial Charities Act, 1883. The building, restoration, and enlarging of churches has always been an important feature of the Company's work, and during ten years they have contributed £3236, besides spending nearly £3000 in building a chapel for their almsfolk, tenants, and parishioners of Lee, in Kent.

The Company never proclaim to the world their good works, and are content to "do good deeds by stealth and blush to find them fame." They spend £1200 a year in regular subscriptions to a large number of public institutions, exclusive of special grants of sums over £30 to special objects requiring assistance. To the Church House they subscribed £250, and gave the same amount to the Clergy Distress Fund. The support of the National Church has been always a prominent feature of the Company's work, for which they have earned the gratitude of all Churchmen.

The Metropolitan Volunteer Corps has recently been assisted by a grant of £500, and the equipment of the City Imperial Volunteer Corps and the War Fund in connection with the South African War received liberal support from the Company.

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The Company have done a noble and useful work in establishing a Convalescent Home at Bognor. It contains fifty beds for men, principally from the London hospitals, and was opened in 1870. A chapel, with an organ, has since been added by the munificence of one of their members, Sir James Tyler ; and the Company appoint a chaplain at a stipend of £120 per annum. Many thousands of patients have been received here, and derived the benefits of sea air and been restored to health and vigour. In 1880 a convalescent home for ladies—the wives, widows, or daughters of gentlemen in poor circumstances requiring rest and sea air was erected ; this the Company maintain entirely out of their corporate funds.

The Company's almshouses were originally built before 1432. In 1593 they were removed to Tower Hill, enlarged in 1637, rebuilt in 1767 at a cost of £2000, and subsequently removed to Lee, in Kent, at a cost of £11,000, providing accommodation for thirty-two inmates. At Lee also there are a set of almshouses founded by Christopher Boone in 1683.

It is pleasant to contemplate the noble record of good work which the Merchant Taylors have accomplished. As patrons of learning, in the government of their large and prosperous school they have shown themselves to be unrivalled ; as helpers of the needy in their distress, as administrators of large and important charities entrusted to them by pious benefactors, they have done their work carefully, efficiently, and thoroughly. The Church of England owes to them a deep debt of gratitude for all that they have done to support her and aid her in her arduous labours amongst the masses of Eastern London ; and the vast numbers of people who have benefited by their generous action will retain an affectionate regard for this venerable Company, which has conferred so many benefits upon the nation during the many centuries of its honourable career.

## VII

## THE SKINNERS' COMPANY

BEFORE the days of sombre black coats and tweed suits the trade of skinner was a large and important industry. The regal ermine of princes, the official robes of judges and peers, and the gowns of the Livery Companies are now almost the only kinds of male costume which require the accessory of fur ; and although the ladies sometimes in this, as in other things, make up for men's deficiencies, the trade of the skinner has somewhat deteriorated since the time when the wearing of fur was esteemed as a mark of distinction. By a statute of Edward III. only members of the royal family, prelates, earls, barons, knights, and ladies, or people of Holy Church who might expend by year £100 of their benefices at least, were allowed to wear the coveted distinguished sign of dignity. The skin of the humble rabbit was always in great request ; these were collected by pedlars throughout the country, and made up for the adornment of nobles and gentlemen. In the time of Henry VIII. many richer foreign furs were imported, and then the trade of the Skinners was a flourishing and important industry.

As a Company, the Skinners yield to few in point of antiquity. In the reign of Henry III. they had a hall, called Copped Hall, which is believed to have occupied the site of their present hall on Dowgate Hill. It originated as a trade guild, formed by a body of men and women associating themselves together, partly as traders for their own joint profit and security, and partly for the purpose of performing certain religious, social, and benevolent duties. This Guild had a governing body, composed of the most capable men of the fraternity, who framed rules for the regulation of the trade and of their religious and social affairs.

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The Company were among the first to receive a Charter from Edward III., which is addressed to "Our beloved men of our city of London, called Skinners," and was intended to enforce the trade regulations drawn up previously by the Governors of the Guild. These regulations related to the fashioning of every fur after a certain manner set out in the Charter, and prohibiting skinners, or phillipars (*pelliparii*) from selling old furs—except those taken from vestments—as though they were new. It also approved of certain men of the mystery being appointed to examine the premises of members of the craft and find out delinquent skinners, and to make a trade search at the fairs of St Botolph, Winton, St Ives, St Edmund, and others, so that fraudulent traders should be punished and chastised, and their furs forfeited.

The second Charter, granted by Richard II., brings out the special religious character of the Company, which it describes as being held "to the honour of God and the precious Body of our Lord Jesus Christ." It allowed them to maintain two chaplains to perform divine service for the brethren and sisters, the benefactors of the guild, and for the souls of faithful departed; to augment their number, to wear a livery, to go in procession on Corpus Christi Day, and to hold a feast or entertainment in some convenient place within the City.

Prior to the granting of this Charter, there seem to have been two guilds of Skinners, one dedicated to Corpus Christi, which had its headquarters at Dowgate Hill, and the other dedicated to the Virgin, and belonging to St Mary Spital. In the reign of Richard II. the two branches were united. By a Charter of Henry VI., granted in 1437, the Guild is described as "The Master and Wardens of the Guild or Fraternity of Corpus Christi of the Skinners of London," which is the title it now holds.

Stow's description of the Skinners' procession on Corpus Christi Day is very striking. "This fraternity had, once every year, on Corpus Christi Day afternoon, a procession, which passed through the principal streets of the City, wherein are borne more than one hundred torches of

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wax, costly garnished, burning bright, and above two hundred clerks and priests in surplices and copes, singing ; after the which were the Sheriffs' servants, the Clerks of the Compters, Chaplains for the Sheriffs, the Mayor's sergeants, the Counsel of the City, the Mayor and Aldermen in scarlet, and then the Skinners in their best liveries."

The procession is still made annually. On Corpus Christi Day there is a gathering of members of the Company at the Hall, and after a new Master and four Wardens have been elected for the ensuing year, a procession is formed, led by boys from Christ's Hospital. Ten boys until recently were privileged to receive their education in that school under the gift of a benefactor of the Company, by name Wm. Stoddard, who died in 1611. In place of the torches of wax and the garlands, every member of the procession now carries a posy of flowers.

In the time of Henry VII. there seems to have been a great increase in the trade ; the skins principally in use were those of the badger, beaver, cat, calf, coney (black and grey), elk, fox, genet, kid, lamb, mosker, otter, rabbit (distinguished from coney), sheep and squirrel. The Continent and far-distant lands were then laid under contributions for the English market.

The Skinners' Guild, no doubt, for many years looked after the trade indicated by the name ; that is to say, skins cured with the fur upon them. It embraced a large number of artisans, and the history of the Company reveals the fact that on several occasions these working men had sundry grievances against the governing body, and alleged that, owing to their want of representatives, their interests and rights were neglected and unrecognised. They brought their grievances before Parliament, and obtained an Act (3 James I.), entitled "An Act for the relief of such as lawfully follow the trade and handicraft of Skinners," and then gained the ear of the Solomon of the North, who, in granting a new Charter to the Company, introduced certain democratic features which were not in accordance with the wishes of the oligarchical Court. The Company refused to acknowledge the new Charter, and lodged a petition

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against it ; in consequence of which it was cancelled, and the Court maintained its ancient constitution.

Charles I. obliged the Company to surrender all their possessions and securities, but these were restored by the Long Parliament. In 1667 they obtained a new Charter from Charles II., which reveals the fact that the trade had greatly revived ; doubtless the gorgeous dresses of the gay cavaliers of Charles's Court contributed greatly to the restoration of the industry. The Companies, however, suffered severely from the arbitrary decrees of Charles II. and his successor, James II., and it was not until the arrival of Dutch William that their ancient position and privileges were restored to them.

In 1671 Sir George Waterman, Lord Mayor, a member of the Company, had some very splendid pageants in his show, one of which is worth describing. It represented a wilderness, consisting of various trees, bushes, brambles, and thickets, inhabited by divers wild beasts and birds of various kinds and colours. In front were two negro boys, mounted on panthers, bearing the banners of the Lord Mayor and the Company's arms. In the rear was a figure of a pyramid and four triumphal arches. In the front arch stood Orpheus playing on a lyre ; on each side was a satyr. Another satyr played on a hautboy, and all the beasts and satyrs danced, curveted and tumbled. A performing bear added to the amusements of the show.

On the arrival of William III. the City of London was *en fête*, and the Companies showed great honour to the new Sovereign. Sir Thomas Pilkington, of this Company, was Lord Mayor during the first year of his rule. One of the pageants of the show in 1689 exhibited the wilderness just described, and, in addition to the wild beasts before mentioned, there were "wolves, bears, panthers, leopards, sables and beavers, together with dogs, cats, foxes and rabbits, and which latter, tost up now and then into a balcony, fell oft upon the Company's heads, and being by them tост again into the crowd, afforded great diversion."

On this occasion an address was delivered to the Skinners' Company,

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which tells of their ancient glories and honourable estate. It runs as follows :—“There is not a Company in this famous City (though yet more ancient) has arrived to the dignity you have done ; you have the honour to have six kings members of your Society, and this year a king and a queen for your royal guests, in the first year of their reign, and the first year of your deliverance from arbitrary and tyrannical impositions. There is yet another honour worthy to be recorded, the deserving patriot of his country, Sir Thomas Pilkington, Lord Mayor, signalised for his sufferings, you have most deservedly exalted from a prison to the Prætorian Chair. This will be your applause for what is done.”

It has been already noticed that by an Act of Parliament, passed on the accession of William III., all the possessions, rights and charters of the Company were restored to them. The history of the Company since that time has not been eventful. For many years the artisan skinners showed much pertinacity in their attempts to be represented on the governing body. Having failed to obtain their object by petitioning the Court of the Company, in 1744 they carried the matter before the Court of King's Bench, and when that failed, a few years later, they commenced an action at law, and, after a lengthy trial, were again defeated.

The functions of the Company as a trade guild have, owing to the altered circumstances of trade, become obsolete. For more than a century and a half those practising the trade of skinners have not been even a majority among the liverymen. But although time has wrought many changes, the Company maintain their ancient constitution and privileges, and in the able management of their corporate and trust property have many onerous duties to perform, which they discharge with wisdom, carefulness and fidelity.

*The Hall and Treasures.*—The home of the Company has for centuries been situated on Dowgate Hill, where their hall now stands. In the early period of its history there were two branches of this ancient society, one in the parish of St John-upon-Walbrook, which probably occupied the site of the present hall; and the other was in St Mary Axe, and at

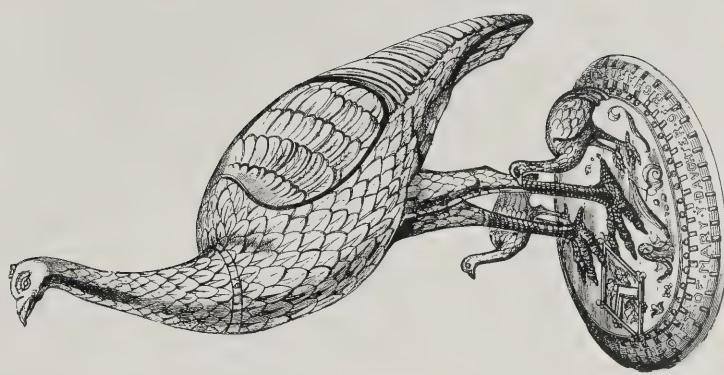
## THE CITY COMPANIES

St Mary Spital. Here stood Skinners' Row, near the famous Leadenhall Market,\* a great centre of their trade. One duty of the fraternity was the keeping in repair of the London wall between Aldgate and Bevis Marks.

The original Skinners' Hall, described by Stow as "a very fayre house, sometimes called Copped Hall," was purchased by the Company, together with certain small tenements, as early as the reign of Henry III.

Little is known of this old building. The Company had a chantry in the Church of St Mildred in Poultry, which shared the fate of similar institutions at the Reformation, and was then valued at £6, 13s. 4d. per annum. Their hall must have contained a commodious refectory in the fifteenth century, as in the settlement of their disputes with the Merchant Taylors the Lord Mayor decreed that, in order to promote friendly feeling, the two Companies should dine together twice every year, and that on the vigil of Corpus Christi Day the banquet be held in Skinners' Hall. Doubtless it was the scene of many joyous feasts and merry-makings, but of these we have no records. The restoration of the monarchy was welcomed by the loyal Skinners with accustomed rejoicings, and Pepys, in his Diary, notices that General Monk was entertained by the Company, and that the royal arms had been erected in the hall in place of the arms of the Parliament. Then came the Great Fire, which swept away the ancient building. From this disaster the Company seem to have recovered more speedily than some of their fellows. The present hall was then erected, surrounding a large quadrangle paved with freestone. It is thus described in 1708 :—"A noble structure built with fine bricks and richly furnished, the hall with right wainscot, and the great parlour with odoriferous cedar." On account of its good accommodation the Lord Mayor sometimes kept his official residence here, and the New East India Company held their meetings. A new front was built in 1791, and under the direction of the architect, Mr Jupp, many alterations were made which destroyed many of the characteristic features of the building.

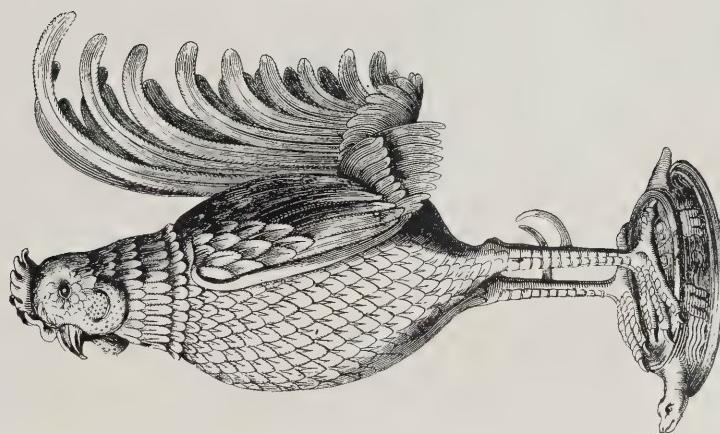
\* Leadenhall is a corruption of "Leatherhall."



THE PEACOCK CUP

At Skinners' Hall

On the base is inscribed "The Gift of Mary, daughter of  
Richard Robinson, and wife to Thomas Smith and James  
Peacock, Skinner<sup>1642</sup>, 1642."



THE COCKAYNE LOVING CUP

At Skinners' Hall

Bequeathed to the Company with four others by the will of  
Mr William Cockayne, dated 24th October, 41 Elizabeth,  
1598



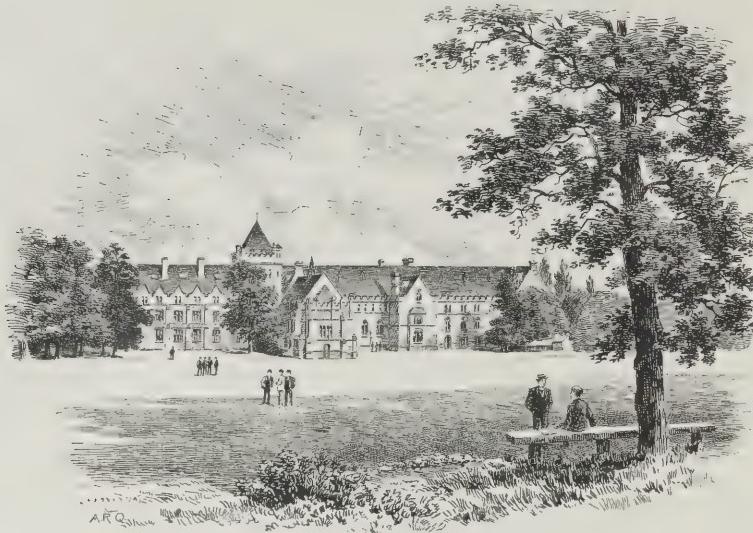
## THE SKINNERS' COMPANY

The hall itself was redecorated in 1891; it is small but handsomely embellished with the arms of past Masters of the Company, Benefactors and distinguished Members. The motto of the Company, "To God only be the Glory," is painted on the wainscot. The drawing-room is richly and elegantly furnished. The court-room contains portraits of departed worthies, amongst whom we notice Sir Thomas Smythe, Sir Thomas Pilkington and Sir Joseph Causton. The Company can boast of many noble and distinguished names which appear upon their list of members, amongst whom we find Edward III. and his Queen, the Black Prince, Richard II. and his Queen, Henry IV. and his Queen, Henry V. and his Queen, Henry VI., and Edward IV. and his Queen.

Sir Andrew Judd, the founder of Tonbridge School, was a notable member. He was Lord Mayor in 1550, and six times Master of the Company.

*Schools and Education.*—Foremost among the very numerous benevolent objects which owe their maintenance and support to this worshipful Company, stands the famous school at Tonbridge. Sir Andrew Judd founded it in his lifetime in 1553, and by his will, in 1558, entrusted it to the care of the Skinners. He ordered that the boys should receive a classical education, and also be taught reading, writing and arithmetic. By the care of the Company, this school from such small beginnings has developed into a very large and flourishing school, having now 380 scholars. It is a first-grade school, in which classics and mathematics are taught, and also science forms an important feature of the *curriculum*. The ancient statutes of the school are interesting. These were drawn up during the lifetime of Sir Andrew Judd and probably under his direction, and submitted for correction to Alexander Nowell, Dean of St Paul's, who expressed his approval. They were then shown to Archbishop Parker, and subscribed by him. The "Dean of Powles" (St Paul's) was of a lenient and kindly disposition, and made sundry alterations in the rules, which showed that he was in favour of mild discipline. He expressly

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SKINNERS' COMPANY.—TONBRIDGE SCHOOLS

added the rule that upon Sundays and holidays the scholars should resort to divine service in the parish church, attended by the master or usher. The account of the Company's annual visitation to Tonbridge School is interesting. They were greeted at the gate of the school with a Latin oration by the head boy. The distribution of bread, money, and clothes to poor people, under the gift of another famous citizen and skinner, Sir Thomas Smythe, in the church, followed. Then, after a cold collation and some Latin orations, the examination was held, followed by a dinner ; and at five o'clock grammatical disputations, a very ancient exercise, were commenced, which concluded with the repetition of English and Latin verses. A prize of a silver pen gilt was given to the six senior scholars, who walked in procession to the church before their patrons, with garlands of fresh

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flowers on their heads. The Company still make their visitation annually as Governors of the School, and although the proceedings have necessarily been somewhat modified, some of the interesting customs above referred to are still preserved. Three pens are now awarded as prizes in different subjects; one whole of gilt, one parcel gilt, and a third, whole of silver.

Owing to the large and continued increase in the number of scholars, the Governors have erected extensive additional accommodation. Tonbridge School has a splendid future as well as an interesting past, and its prosperity is largely due to the excellent management of the Governors as Trustees of its estates. There are several scholarships entitling boys to free tuition at the school, and four valuable exhibitions are as a rule awarded annually, tenable at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and other approved places of higher education.

As part of the same foundation, the Governors established at Tonbridge, in 1888, Sir Andrew Judd's commercial school for day scholars. This is now a flourishing middle school, and provides instruction for over 130 boys. At Tunbridge Wells, in 1887, the Company opened a Middle School for boys. For this purpose, with the consent of the Charity Commissioners, the accumulated surplus funds of two charities administered by the Company, amounting to £10,000, were appropriated, and a like sum of £10,000 was provided by the Company out of their corporate funds. There are about 125 scholars in attendance, but there is accommodation for twice that number. In 1890 they founded a large girls' school at Stamford Hill, in North London, which provides instruction for 350 day scholars.

Several scholarships and exhibitions exist for the benefit of students at the Universities. Sir Thomas Smythe, Sir James Lancaster, Mr Edward Lewis, Mr Henry Fisher, and Sir Andrew Judd were the founders, and the scholarships are bestowed upon poor and deserving young men. The Company has recently founded exhibitions for scholars attending King's College School; Central Foundation School, Cowper Street, London; City

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of London School ; Girton College, Cambridge ; and Alexandra College, Dublin. The Company have always striven to encourage students, and to complete the educational ladder by which industrious scholars may ascend to the higher realms of knowledge.

The Skinners' Company have taken a leading part in the furtherance of technical education. From its commencement they have been liberal supporters of the City and Guilds of London Institute, and they have aided the Leather Trades School at Bethnal Green, which is connected with the same Institute. They have subscribed generously to more than one of the recently established Polytechnics of the metropolis, such as the People's Palace at Mile End, and the Borough Road Polytechnic, while towards the maintenance of the Northampton Institute at Clerkenwell the Skinners' Company have given £1000 a year, and have made smaller grants, from time to time, to various other institutions in which technical instruction is given. Nor have they confined their operations to London alone. Technical schools in the provinces have received from them liberal aid, especially those connected with the Skinners' industry. The Leather Trade School at Leeds is one of those which have been encouraged by the support of the Company. It will thus be seen that, in the assistance they render both to general and technical education, the Skinners' Company are performing excellent work.

With regard to the support of their aged poor, I am informed that a new scheme was drawn up in 1891, with the consent of the Charity Commissioners. In 1683 Lewis Newbury bequeathed a sum of money for the purpose of founding almshouses which were erected at Mile End. Sir Andrew Judd, the founder of Tonbridge School, also bequeathed, in 1558, certain property to the Company, and charged them to give eightpence per week and £1, 5s. 4d. yearly for coals to six almsfolk in the almshouses at St Helen's, given by him to the Company. This benefaction was increased by that of Dame Alice Smith, daughter of Sir Andrew Judd, in 1592. The almshouses at St Helen's, Bishopsgate, have now been closed, and those at Mile End have also terminated

## THE SKINNERS' COMPANY



SKINNERS' COMPANY.—ALMSHOUSES, PALMERS' GREEN

their existence. Under the new scheme, new almshouses were erected at Palmers' Green in 1894.

The Skinners' Company have no Church patronage, but they are the custodians of certain trusts connected with the Church, which differ from any that we have hitherto met with. These are for the benefit of poor preachers. Under the will of Sir James Lancaster (A.D. 1618) there is a bequest of £5 per annum to each of four poor preachers. The estate from which this and several other benefactions are derived is managed by the Corporation of Basingstoke, but the poor preachers are selected by the Company, under the scheme of the Court of Chancery made in 1713. John Meredith also, in 1630, left £10 yearly to be given to two poor unbenediced preachers in sums of £5 each. These bequests have been supplemented by the Company out of their own funds, and at the present time about thirty poor clergymen of the Church of England are receiving the benefit of these grants as pensioners of £20 a year from the Company.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

These pensions have, doubtless, proved of great service to many poor and aged clergymen. We find amongst the list of charities the usual acts of kind benevolence to poor prisoners in the compters and prisons of the metropolis. The need of these benefactions, of course, no longer exists. The state of our prisons now is very different from that which existed in former centuries, when poor, half-starved creatures begged behind their bars for money from the passers-by, and depended for their subsistence upon their own means or upon the charity of others. With the consent of the Charity Commissioners, all these prison charities were redeemed under the new Prisons Charities Scheme of 1877, and the money applied to other objects of a deserving nature.

The Skinners' Company have also a large number of pensioners. If, from misfortune, or by reason of sickness, infirmity, or other good cause, any of their members are in need, assistance is granted to them by the Company. To hospitals, infirmaries, convalescent homes, and the like, they give liberally, quite apart from the administration of charitable funds devoted to those specific objects for which they were originally bequeathed to the Company's care; and we have already seen how much the Company assists the spread of educational work.

*Plate.*—A few words must be said about the ornamental plate belonging to the Company. This is valuable and interesting. It consists of gifts from past and present members of the Company, and includes loving cups, salt-cellars, plates, etc., dating from the sixteenth century. Among others there are the five silver-gilt loving cups in the form of cocks, of which the heads must be removed for the purposes of drinking. They were bequeathed to the Company by Mr William Cockayne (a name familiar to all citizens) in 1598, and, in accordance with a covenant with Mr Cockayne's executors, they are used annually on the occasion of the election of the Master and Wardens of the Company. Much of the plate of this period represents animals and birds. There is another loving cup in the shape of a peahen with two chicks, and a snuff-box in the shape of a leopard.

## THE SKINNERS' COMPANY

*Lord Mayors.*—Between 1347 and 1766 there were twenty-four members of the Skinners' Company who served the office of Lord Mayor of London. Commencing with Mr Thomas Legge (ancestor of the present Earl of Dartmouth), who is believed to have been the first to enjoy the title of "Lord Mayor" in his second Mayoralty in 1354, as distinct from "Mayor," the names of prominent members and benefactors of the Company occur, such as Sir Andrew Judd, Sir Thomas Pilkington, Sir Robert Tichborne (whose name appears as one of those who signed the warrant for the execution of Charles I.), and several others.

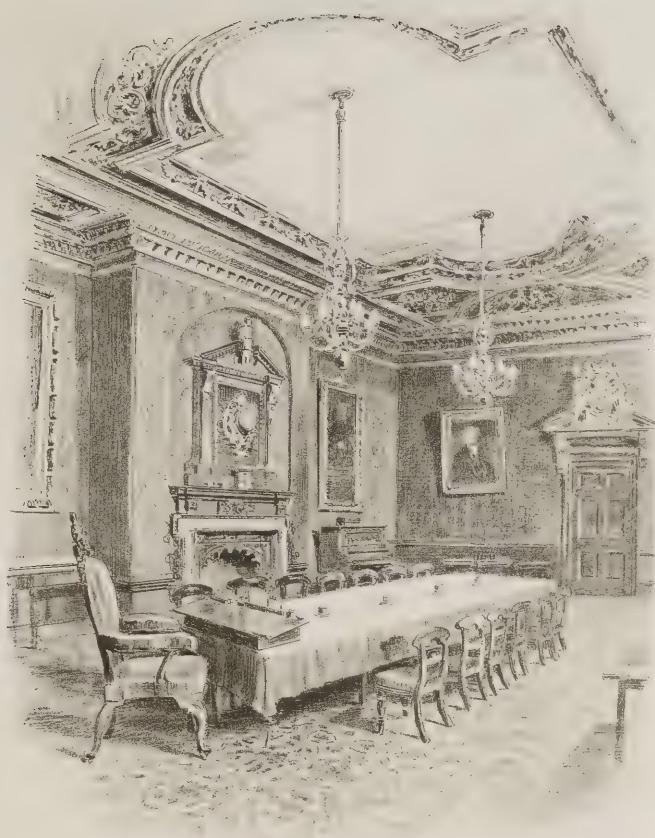
The early history of the Company, as we have seen, possesses features of great interest ; its subsequent career has been one of active benevolence and good deeds. The present condition of their flourishing schools and other charitable institutions abundantly proves that they have carried out the intentions of those noble men who had such confidence in the integrity and wisdom of the Company that they entrusted to their care the schemes they had devised for the benefit of future generations.

*Income, Charities and Expenditure.*—The total income of the Company is £44,000 ; of this sum £29,000 is corporate income, and £15,000 represents the amount of their trust funds.

## VIII

## THE HABERDASHERS' COMPANY

IF, in mediæval times, we had walked down Cheapside, then known as *Chepe*, we should have seen, beside the stalls of the mercers, those of the haberdashers, who would have offered to sell us laces of red leather, bright-coloured ribands, caps of divers hues, and other smaller articles of dress which the mercers' stalls no longer provided. If we had lived in the Stuart period, we should have seen their shops gaily furnished with foreign goods, and perhaps, like other Londoners, have "begun to expend extravagantly, whereof great complaints were made amongst the graver sort." There were displayed in tempting fashion French gloves, Spanish girdles, daggers, swords, cards and pennons, inkhorns, toothpicks, and silver buttons. Indeed, the haberdashers dealt in a large variety of merchandise, and were very omnivorous in their tastes. Pins were also an important article of sale. Before these were imported, English ladies used to fasten their dresses with skewers or pointed thorns; but at length the English folk learned how to make them, and fashioned them so well as to eclipse all foreign rivals. In early times there were two distinct branches of the trade, and each branch had at first its own guild, one dedicated to St Catherine and the other to St Nicholas. These were certainly in existence as early as 1371 A.D., when their bye-laws were drawn up. One branch of the trade was carried on by the Haberdashers of Hats; and these were divided into two crafts, the Hurriers or Cappers, and the Hatter Merchants, who, until Tudor times, maintained their separate individuality. The other branch of the trade was composed of the haberdashers of small wares, called also Millianers, or Milliners, because they chiefly imported their goods from Milan, in Italy. The



*The Court Room of the Haberdashers' Company  
By Sir Christopher Wren*



## THE HABERDASHERS' COMPANY

fraternity of the Cappers is an old foundation, and was licensed by Henry III.

The first Charter of the Haberdashers' Company was granted by Henry VI. in A.D. 1448, which authorised and empowered the liegemen of the mystery of Haberdashers to erect and found a guild or fraternity in honour of St Catherine. The Company soon became rich and prosperous, and ranked high in precedence among the ancient Livery Companies of London. In 1466, at the coronation of Elizabeth, the queen of Edward IV., they were the eighth in the procession. The old records of the Company were destroyed in the Great Fire, and therefore many of the interesting details of their history and their manners and customs cannot now be gathered.

A process of amalgamation seems to have taken place in the time of the early Tudors, and several smaller guilds and fraternities were united. By a Charter of Henry VII. the Hurriers and Hatter Merchants were joined into one craft, and incorporated as the Fraternity of Hurriers; and by another Charter he united the newly formed body with the Haberdashers, declared that they should be one craft and perpetual commonalty by the name of the Merchant Haberdashers, and granted them the usual monopoly of trade, trade searches, and powers of inflicting punishment on offenders, etc. Henry VIII. gave them an *inspeximus* Charter, conferring additional privileges, but omitting the honourable title of "merchant" prefixed by his predecessor.

The Company was in the height of its glory at the coronation of Anne Boleyn in 1533, when one of their number was Lord Mayor. On this occasion there were "marvailous cunnyng pageantes," in which Apollo with the Muses, and St Anne with her children, had each a conspicuous place. The Three Graces stood in Cornhill, and the Cardinal Virtues in Fleet Street; a fountain of Helicon, with courteous inconsistency, ran Rhenish wine, and its rival, the conduit in Cheap, foamed forth claret. The show on the river was magnificent. All decked with seemly banners and bannerets, the barges proceeded from Greenwich to

## THE CITY COMPANIES

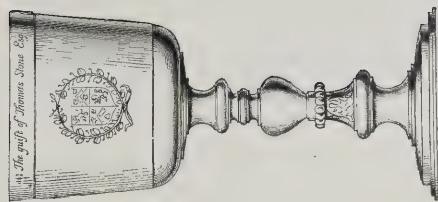
the Tower, and thence to Westminster, the Lord Mayor's barge at their head, having divers instruments of music, that played continually, followed by fifty barges of the Company, and then by the other Companies. Before the Mayor's barge was a raft, on which was a great red dragon, continually moving and casting wild fire, and, round about, terrible, monstrous, and wild men, also casting fire and making a hideous noise. With such shouts of joy was this young queen hailed ! Only three years later, on Tower Green, many of this same joyous crowd beheld her fair head struck off, and mourned her speedy downfall. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

The unhappy queen's famous daughter, Elizabeth, favoured the Company by granting a Charter which established all their former privileges, and allowed them to have a hall within the City. They had power to apprehend, arrest, and commit to prison all persons who should be found faulty in anything, and such as were stubborn and resisted their directions. These trade powers had existed for some time, but by degrees the trade of haberdashery became so interwoven with other trades, such as drapers, hosiers, etc., that there was no longer any distinct business of haberdashery.

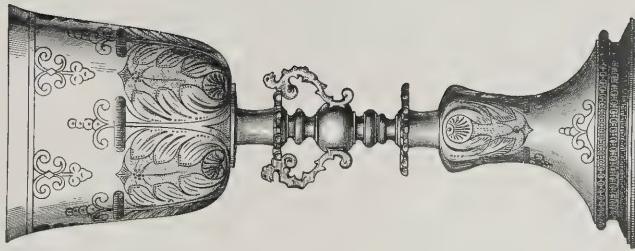
The Company's bye-laws and many records perished with their hall in 1666 ; a new code was drawn up in 1675, by which they are now governed. The Haberdashers were forced to surrender their Charters and their privileges by the arbitrary demands of Charles II. In his treatment of the Companies he certainly conformed to the judgment which the rhymster has passed on him,—

“ He never said a foolish thing ;  
He never did a wise one.”

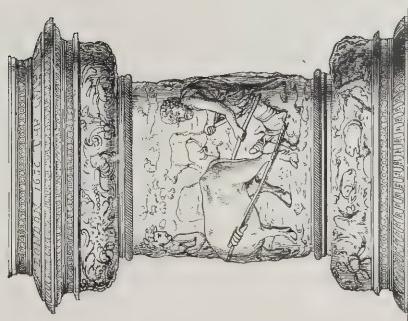
Happily, through fear of the coming of William of Orange, James II. restored all privileges of which his predecessor had deprived them, and under William III. their ancient rights were firmly established. Since that period the history of this Company has been uneventful. They



LOVING CUP, 1649  
At Haberdashers' Hall



STANDING CUP, 1637  
At Haberdashers' Hall



STANDING SALT, 1636  
At Haberdashers' Hall



## THE HABERDASHERS' COMPANY

have occupied themselves in the management of the important trusts placed in their charge, and in the carrying on of good works, of which some account will be hereafter given.

*Hall and Treasures.*—The site of the present hall was bequeathed to the Company in 1478 by William Bacon, citizen and haberdasher. During the Commonwealth period, the Parliamentary Commissioners held their meetings in Haberdashers' Hall, but no description of it remains. It was swept away, with all its valuable store of plate and records, by the Great Fire, and subsequently Sir Christopher Wren was employed by the Company to build a new hall, of which now only the court-room and drawing-room remain. A fire destroyed, in 1840, the rest of the building, and made room for the present edifice. A courtyard occupied the centre of the ground; but space in London is now too valuable, and the Company have found warehouses more profitable than paving-stones. The hall itself was erected in 1864, and is a handsome room adorned with the arms of the past masters. Two royal portraits of George I. and Queen Caroline have recently been restored to the Company after an absence of a hundred years, having been discovered in Devonshire. How they left the Company's hall remains a mystery.

The court-room still retains the fine ceiling designed by Wren, and contains an interesting figure of St Catherine, which formerly was the figure-head of the Company's barge. There are also portraits of George Whitmore, Lord Mayor in 1659; John Banks (1716), who bequeathed £200 a year in trust to the Company for his descendants; William Bond (1671); William Jones, merchant-adventurer and haberdasher, of whom I shall have more to say presently; Thomas Aldersey (1594), founder of the Company's school at Bunbury in Cheshire, whose descendants still inhabit the family mansion, Aldersey Hall; Thomas Skinner, Lord Mayor in 1795; D. Austin, 1832, and Peter Pope. In an oaken case there is an interesting record of the list of contributors of the Court of the Company to the restoration of the hall after the Great Fire, and of plate presented.

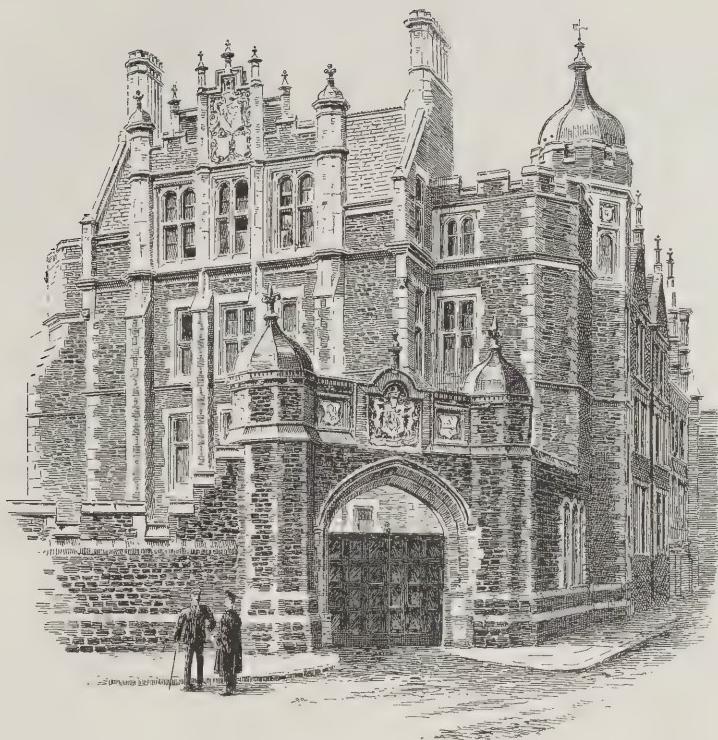
## THE CITY COMPANIES

The staircase is handsome. The walls are panelled and are adorned with portraits, among which we noticed Robert Aske, William Adams, Sir Hugh Hammersley, Lord Mayor in 1776, First Colonel of the City, President of the Artillery Gentlemen, Governor of the Company of Russian Merchants, etc. ; Jerome Knapp, formerly Clerk of the Company, by Gainsborough. There are also portraits by Sir Joshua Reynolds of Queen Charlotte and George III. In the beautiful drawing-room, the ceiling of which was designed by Wren, there is a fine painting of the Nativity.

*Income, Charities and Expenditure.*—The total income of the Company amounts to £50,000, of which £41,000 constitute their trust funds, and £9000 their corporate income. It is much to be regretted that their wealth, owing to various causes, is less than it was when the returns were made to the Royal Commission some years ago, but in spite of that it will be seen how very much they are doing for the public weal.

They have the patronage of thirteen benefices, besides five lectureships, which are distributed in the counties of Cheshire, Gloucestershire, Monmouth, Surrey, Shropshire, Leicestershire, Suffolk, and in London. The cause of their possession of so large an amount of patronage is that they became the administrators of the bequest of Mary Weld, who left £2000 in 1623 for the purpose of purchasing rectories and parsonages. They have shown themselves to be kind and generous patrons, and the clergy who are fortunate enough to hold these benefices are far better off in the present time of severe agricultural depression than their brethren, for they receive their tithes in full. The Company has also contributed largely to the supply of the spiritual needs of the metropolis by erecting churches. Towards the building of All Saints', Hatcham, they gave £1500; £4000 towards St Peter's, Hoxton; and they have built St Catherine's Church, Hatcham. A curious bequest was entrusted to the Company by Roger Jeston in 1622, viz., £5 a year to the preachers at St Paul's Cross. This sum is now paid to some poor clergyman.

With regard to the promotion of education, the Company have no



HABERDASHERS' COMPANY.—GRAMMAR SCHOOLS, MONMOUTH



## THE HABERDASHERS' COMPANY

less than six schools in their charge, in the welfare of which they take a great and increasing interest. These schools are :—

1. A free grammar school at Bunbury, Cheshire, founded by Thomas Aldersey in 1594. The school was rebuilt in 1875, and provides accommodation for 140 boys. It is under Government inspection ; the reports are invariably excellent ; the highest Government grant is always earned ; and the Company contribute out of their own corporate funds the sum of £60 for the maintenance of the school.

2. A grammar school at Monmouth, founded by William Jones in 1614, whose portrait adorns Haberdashers' Hall. The story is told of his visiting *incognito* his native place—Newland, in Gloucestershire—after he had amassed his wealth as a haberdasher in London. Unfortunately for them, his old neighbours did not accord him a hospitable welcome ; he therefore proceeded to Monmouth, and bequeathed a large portion of his wealth to that town. There are also twenty almshouses for the poor of Monmouth connected with this benefaction. Since the issue of the Royal Commission a new scheme has been formed for the administration of the Jones charity. A new girls' school has been built at Monmouth for 100 girls, in addition to an elementary school for 100 scholars, and a new grammar school at Pontypool, West Monmouthshire, for 200 scholars. They have also, with the sanction of the Charity Commissioners, spent the large sum of £17,000 upon improving the grammar school at Monmouth. It is evident that William Jones could not have entrusted his charity to more generous and beneficent patrons.

3. A free grammar school at Newport in Shropshire, founded by William Adams in 1656, for 80 boys of that town, who were instructed in classics, writing, and arithmetic. This is now, under a new scheme, no longer free ; there are now 84 boys, and a sum of £3000 has recently been expended on improvements to the school buildings.

4. A free school in Cripplegate, founded in 1663 by Throgmorton Trotman, for the daily education of 100 boys in elementary subjects. The Company contributed £923 in building the school, and £700 in

## THE CITY COMPANIES

rebuilding the same. Mr Trotman, amongst other bequests, left to the Company a sum of £6 "to give to those who take pains," and also £4 for candles for the preachers. This school no longer exists, but a new scheme is about to be established.

5. A school and almshouses at Hoxton, founded by Robert Aske in 1692, the former for twenty poor boys, sons of freemen of the Company, and the latter for twenty poor men of the same. This Mr Aske was a great benefactor of the Haberdashers, and bequeathed to the Company about £28,000. By a new scheme of the Endowed School Commissioners in 1873 the almshouses were pulled down, and the pensioners made out-pensioners. The school was enlarged for the accommodation of 300 boys and a similar number of girls in 1873. In 1898 the boys' school was removed to West Hampstead, and the girls' school to Acton. The Company spent no less than £36,000 on the boys' school and £28,000 on the girls' school. There are over 300 pupils in each school, and this large number of scholars, and the long list of successes obtained by the pupils, prove them to be very flourishing and successful institutions.

6. The Company has also built at Hatcham, in connection with the same foundation, day schools for 500 boys and 300 girls. Valuable exhibitions are given at both schools. It will be seen from this account of the Haberdashers' Company's Educational work how very much they have accomplished, and how numerous are the schools which have been founded and maintained by the generous action of the Company. With regard to scholarships, besides fourteen exhibitions at the Universities, ranging from £5 to £12 each, for which the Company are trustees, they award from their own funds five scholarships of £40 a year each, one for the most distinguished scholar attending their schools, and four for sons, grandsons, and apprentices of liverymen, to enable them to complete their education for the learned professions. They have also four exhibitions of £50 each for scholars from Monmouth school proceeding to the Universities.

## THE HABERDASHERS' COMPANY

Some of the peaceful asylums for the aged poor we have already mentioned in connection with certain schools. Mr Jones, of Newland, Gloucestershire, did not leave his native place quite destitute, although he favoured more largely the more hospitable Monmouth. He endowed a preachership, doubtless to instruct his old neighbours in the duty of "entertaining strangers," and also founded almshouses for sixteen old men and women of the parish. In addition to the almshouses at Monmouth, there are also four at Newport in Shropshire.

It will be seen from the statement of the income of the Company that their corporate income is small, while their trust income is exceedingly large. They have no less than fifty-seven charities to administer, and this will give our readers some idea of the large amount of administrative work which this entails. It should be remembered that the Haberdashers—and, in fact, all the Livery Companies, whose accounts we have examined—deduct only a small fraction of the cost of the management of their trusts from the charities, and not only do they administer these benefactions practically free of charge, but they give largely out of their corporate income for the augmentation of their trusts. The Haberdashers spend no less than one-fifth of their corporate income in the management of their charities. Several of the smaller trust charities have been redeemed by the transfer of Consols to the City Parochial Charity Trustees.

The Company contribute a sixteenth of their corporate income in supporting objects of a beneficent character, amongst which hospitals, infirmaries, homes, and other public institutions greatly benefit by the charity of Haberdashers. Formerly they contributed one-tenth, but they were obliged to reduce their subscriptions on account of the heavy corporate tax of £500 per annum which they are called upon to pay.

It has already been noticed how much the Company do for the promotion of general education not only in London but in other parts of England. They have not been able to see their way to support technical education, on account of the smallness of their corporate funds, which are

## THE CITY COMPANIES

heavily drained by the continual requirements of their charities for additional sustentation. Those gentlemen who are so forward in their demands upon other people's purses ought to be aware that all have not the same wealth ; and that, whereas Companies endowed with large corporate funds are able to contribute largely to many desirable objects, those who have large trusts and small corporate incomes cannot possibly subscribe to the same extent. The popular conception appears to be that all the Livery Companies are alike wealthy, that they all have vast sums for which they have no immediate requirements, and that, whatever the state of their finances may be, they all must be persuaded, or induced, or compelled, to give whatever is required from them. Unlike many of their compeers, the Haberdashers' Company's property has decreased in value during recent years. Agricultural depression and other causes have reduced their income. The heavy corporate tax which they have now to pay is a severe drain on their resources, and diminishes their power of doing good. The rates alone which they pay amount to £700 per annum.

In the administration of their charities the greatest care is exercised, and much individual attention is invariably given to the cases which come before them for relief. In the case of apprentices, very minute inquiries are always made with regard to the situations where the youths are placed, and their safety and welfare are well looked after. It will thus be seen how worthy the Haberdashers' Company have proved themselves to be of the great, numerous, and important trusts committed to their care by pious benefactors in days gone by. The charities could not be in safer or better custody.

## IX

## THE SALTERS' COMPANY

IN all countries no article of consumption has been more generally valued than salt. Among some nations we believe that it has been used as a measure of wealth, and its use in England dates back to the time of the Romans, who had salt-pits here. The *salinae* of the Domesday Survey are very numerous, and abound especially in Worcestershire and Cheshire, which are still the principal centres of the salt trade, and along the sea-coast from Norfolk to Sussex. At the latter places salt was procured from sea water by evaporation, while at the inland stations it was extracted from the brine or salt springs. Rock salt was not discovered before 1670. When we consider the very large amount of salted provisions used by our ancestors, when salted fish was almost the universal diet during Lent—when we read the bills of fare provided for the houses of the nobility, of which, at every meal during all the year, salt salmon, salt sturgeon, salt eels, etc., formed part, and also that the refectories of the monks were largely supplied with the same articles of food—we shall understand that the salt manufacturers and merchants were in great request, and performed for society many useful functions.

The antiquity of the Company is great. A guild of brethren and sisters of All Hallows', Bread Street, was in existence in the reign of Edward III., who were associated for the purpose of carrying on works of religion and benevolence. That monarch granted certain liberties and protection to the Salters of London; but their earliest royal licence was given to the Company by Richard II. in 1394, which permitted them to be a fraternity in honour of the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Church of All Saints in Bread Street, London. This document bears the Great Seal of England. The quarters of the Company were near to those

## THE CITY COMPANIES

of the Fishmongers, their kindred tradesmen, in Bread Street. There, in 1454, Thomas Beamond, citizen and salter, left to the wardens of the brotherhood of a Guild of the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Church of All Saints, Bread Street, and their successors for ever, certain lands in Bread Street, whereon had recently been erected the Salters' Hall, together with other property, out of the rents and profits of which he directed that the hall should be repaired or rebuilt as occasion might require. This will also give directions for certain religious observances, and for the support of poor salters in almshouses. Some litigious persons some years later endeavoured to prove that the Company and the Guild were separate bodies, and that the latter only were entitled to the bequest of Thomas Beamond ; but the law decided that the two bodies were identical.

The Salters' Company lived and thrived in mediæval times. They supported the poor in their almshouses, they performed their usual religious observances, and held their accustomed feasts. The bill of fare of one of their dinners, held in 1506, has been preserved, of which I am glad to possess a facsimile. It is interesting and curious, and is worth recording.

BILL OF FARE FOR FIFTY PEOPLE OF THE COMPANY OF SALTERS, A.D. 1506.

	s.	d.		s.	d.
36 chickens . . . . .	4	6	2 ditto of butter . . . . .	0	4
1 swan and 4 geese . . . . .	7	0	4 breasts of veal . . . . .	1	5
9 rabbits . . . . .	1	4	Bacon . . . . .	0	6
2 rumps of beef tails . . . . .	0	2	Quarter of a load of coals . . . . .	0	4
6 quails . . . . .	1	6	Faggots . . . . .	0	2
2 ounces of pepper . . . . .	0	2	3 gallons and a half of Gascoyne wine	2	4
2 ounces of cloves and mace . . . . .	0	4	1 bottle muscedina . . . . .	0	8
1½ ounce saffron . . . . .	0	6	Cherries and tarts . . . . .	0	8
3 pounds sugar . . . . .	0	8	Salt . . . . .	0	1
2 pounds raisons . . . . .	0	4	Verjuice and vinegar . . . . .	0	2
1 pound dates . . . . .	0	4	Paid the cook . . . . .	3	4
1½ comfits . . . . .	0	2	Perfume . . . . .	0	2
½ hundred eggs . . . . .	0	2½	1 bushel and a half of meal . . . . .	0	8
4 gallons curds . . . . .	0	4	Water . . . . .	0	3
1 ditto gooseberries . . . . .	0	2	Garnishing the vessels . . . . .	0	3

The books of the Company contain also a curious receipt for making a Christmas pie, which shows that as early as the seventeenth year of

## THE SALTERS' COMPANY

Richard II., A.D. 1394, cooking had developed into a high art. It is entitled, "For to make a moste choyce Paaste of Gamys to be eten at ye Feste of Chrystemasse."

The original grant of arms was made to the Company in the reign of Henry VIII., A.D. 1530, by Thomas Benolt, Clarencieux, the supporters and crest being added in the time of Elizabeth. The ensigns are three covered salts, per chevron azure and gules. Above is a helmet, and, issuing from a cloud argent, a sinister arm proper holding a salt. The "supporters" are *ounces* or small leopards, but some authorities think that the animals represented are otters.

In consideration of a large payment made by the Company, King Edward VI. reconveyed to them the whole of the annual payments arising out of their property in respect of "superstitious" uses, which had been held forfeited to the Crown at the time of the abolition of chantries in the reign of Henry VIII.

The first Charter of incorporation was granted by Queen Elizabeth, in 1559, to "the keepers and Wardens and Commonalty of the art or mystery of Salters, London," and new ordinances were drawn up for the government of the Guild. It also conferred on the Company the right of search in the premises of persons using the art or mystery of Salters in the City of London and suburbs thereof, for unwholesome merchandise and false weights and measures.

As we have seen, an important epoch in the history of the great Companies was the period when James I. and his advisers induced them to undertake the colonisation of the greater part of Londonderry, in the province of Ulster. We have noticed that several of the Companies sold their Irish estates many years ago, but the Salters were one of the six who retained their property. By their liberal action as landlords, they have made that part of Ireland the most loyal and flourishing part of the country, and have expended upwards of £50,000 upon their property, in rebuilding places of worship, erecting and endowing dispensaries and schools, in drainage works, and other objects of utility.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

Heavy losses were entailed upon the Salters' Company by the Great Fire. The whole of their estate, and the greater part of their archives were destroyed. Not only were they obliged to rebuild their hall, but all their almspeople were dependent upon them, and the estates which furnished the means, owing to the devastation, yielded no income. But they were determined that the poor should not suffer, and for many years they supported their almspeople out of their own funds. It is, perhaps, unnecessary to mention the action of Charles II. with regard to this Company, as we have had occasion frequently to refer to it in the records of their predecessors ; it is sufficient to remark that all their ancient rights, privileges, and franchises were restored to them by William III.

*Hall and Treasures.*—The Salters have had no less than five halls. Their original hall in Bread Street, bequeathed to them by Thomas Beamond in 1454, was destroyed in 1539 by one of the fires which were so frequent in Old London. Stow states “there was a great fyre at Salters' Hall in Bred Strete, and much harm done.” The hall was rebuilt, together with the almshouses for the “poor decayed brethren” ; and during the Civil War period the leaders of the Parliament assembled here, and a tract was issued, dated 1641, entitled “Observations upon motion lately made by certain persons sitting usually at Salters' Hall, in Bread Street, London, and then employed about raising of more Regiments of Horse and Foot.” In the same year the Company migrated to Oxford House, the town mansion of the Priors of Torrington, adjoining the east end of the Church of St Swithin, London Stone ; upon this site the present hall now stands. Oxford House was completely destroyed by the Great Fire, and a new hall was then built. It was a small structure of brick, surrounded by a large garden, and near it stood Salters' Hall Meeting-house, which was rented of the Company by a congregation of Dissenters.

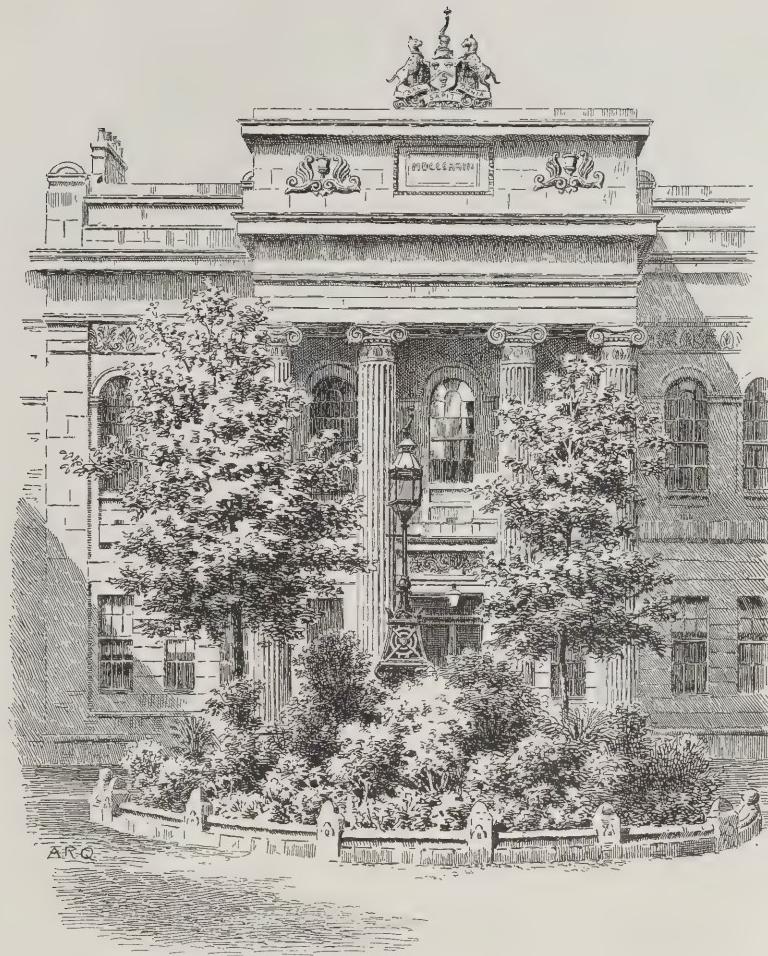
The foundation stone of the present hall of the Company was laid in 1823, and the magnificent structure finished in 1827. The large open space in front adds greatly to the imposing appearance of the hall. Amongst the treasures of the Company are the original grant of arms by





QUEEN CHARLOTTE

From the Painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds in the possession of  
the Salters' Company



SALTERS' COMPANY.—ENTRANCE TO HALL



## THE SALTERS' COMPANY

Thomas Benolt, Clarencieux, in 1530; an old map of their Irish estate, and a finely executed drawing of their lands at Maidenhead, Bray and Cookham in Berks. In the court-room there stands the old Master's Chair, saved from the wreck of the Great Fire, and there are also some portraits which also escaped destruction, notably those of Charles I., William Robson, and Barnard Hyde. The hall itself is very fine and beautifully decorated, adorned with portraits. Those of Queen Charlotte and George III. are supposed to have been executed by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

*Income, Charities and Expenditure.*—The total income of the Salters' Company is £21,000. Their trust income is very small, and only amounts to £2000, while their corporate income is £19,000.

With regard to their support of their indigent members we have already noticed that in connection with their ancient hall there were certain almshouses. These were established by Thomas Beamond, the founder of the Company, who left his house in Bread Street for their hall, together with six mansions for six indigent Salters. In 1578 Sir Ambrose Nicholas, Alderman and Lord Mayor of London, founded certain almshouses for twelve Salters in Monkwell Street, Cripplegate. After the Great Fire the Salters rebuilt these almshouses out of their own funds and supported the almsfolk when there was no income from the property left by the original donors to carry on the charity. In 1863 the almspeople, eighteen in number, were removed to Watford, where almshouses had been built for their reception under the sanction of the Charity Commissioners at a total cost of upwards of £11,000. These buildings are very handsome and comfortable, and afford a delightful refuge for the old people who are fortunate enough to become recipients of the Company's charity. Out of the same funds also a large number of pensioners are supported. The total yearly cost of the almshouses is about £1000. Pensions are given to members of the Company who are in pecuniary difficulties resulting from age, misfortune, or ill-health. As much as £1500 a year is given away for the relief of persons suffering from these distresses.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

The Company have also a set of almshouses at Maidenhead, which were founded by James Smith, citizen and salter, in 1661. He directed that £40 should be paid annually to eight almsmen and their wives, instead of which the bountiful Company give £187 per annum, besides coals, medical attendance, a Christmas gift, and woollen clothing. One George Pearce left £1000 for investment for the comfort of these poor people, who are elected by the ratepayers subject to the approval of the Court of the Company. The endowment of this charity is derived from a farm at Maidenhead.

With regard to actual Church work, we understand that the Company have now no Church patronage. Formerly the advowson of St Swithin's Church was in their gift, but many years ago they relinquished that charge; but they still retain the appointment to a weekly lectureship in the church of St Mary-at-Hill, founded by Barnard Hyde in 1630. The preacher is paid out of the bequest £30 a year; to this sum the Company for many years added £40 out of their own funds, but this amount is now devoted to a scholarship which they have founded at St Paul's Choir School. In building churches and chapels on their Irish estate they have spent more than £9000 since 1853, and £1000 on the Roman Catholic Church at Magherafelt, about one-third of their tenants being Roman Catholics. They give also £260 a year to the Irish Church Sustentation Fund, £160 in supplementing the stipends of ministers on their Irish estates, and they contribute to the building, rebuilding, and restoration of churches in England on an average about £80 per annum. The following is the list of their donations and subscriptions which they gave in one year out of their corporate funds:—

Assistance given to poor individual Salters and others . . . . .	upwards of £2000
For the support of Education, both technical and general . . . . .	" " 1300
For Exhibitions and Scholarships for Salters and non-Salters . . . . .	" " 700
For the support of Hospitals, Dispensaries, etc. . . . .	" " 1100
For Religious and Missionary objects . . . . .	" " 360
Miscellaneous charitable objects . . . . .	" " 1770



GEORGE THE THIRD

From the Painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds in the possession of  
the Salters' Company



## THE SALTERS' COMPANY

Under the gift of Mr William Robson (1637) they pay annually to St John's College, Cambridge, and Jesus College, Oxford, a sum of £10 for the assistance of two poor scholars, and out of their own funds they give two exhibitions of £80 each for the advancement of Natural Science, to be competed for by scholars attending the City of London School and King's College School, London. These are tenable for four years at the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, London, or Durham. The Company are the main supporters of Rainey's Foundation School in Ireland, to the support of which they gave £200 per annum for many years, and for this purpose have now set aside certain property in Magherafelt.

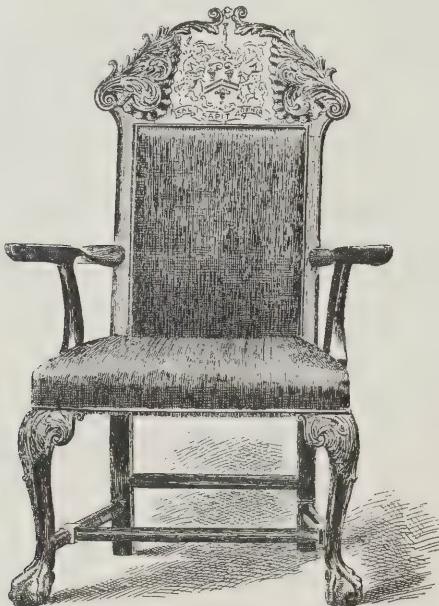
We have now given some account of the more important of the good works which the Salters' Company perform. We have been able to refer only to the larger schemes of public utility which find in them able and zealous supporters. The outside world knows nothing of the active yet quietly administered charity bestowed upon the needy in their distress, upon those who have been worsted in the world's warfare, and who would prefer rather to starve than to publicly proclaim their poverty. Many there are who have been nurtured in affluence and comfort, and yet have lived to find themselves bereft of wealth and even of the necessities of life. Such cases, and there are many such, find in the Livery Companies the friends they need, without whose timely succour, so generously yet quietly bestowed, they would sink and die.

The old hospitality of the Company is still maintained. Bequests have been left towards the expenses of entertainment, one of them being on the express condition that ladies, the wives of the assistants, should be present. The Livery Companies, in dispensing the hospitality of the City of London, are only carrying out the intentions of their ancient benefactors, and are maintaining the hospitable traditions which Time doth consecrate. A recent distinguished guest at one of the Company's banquets declared that those whose duty called them to distant lands in the service of their Queen and country, to endure many hardships and

## THE CITY COMPANIES

privations in barbarous regions, looked forward to the welcome they would receive from the City Guilds of London with glad expectancy, and were cheered and encouraged in the midst of all their difficulties by the sympathy of England's chiefest citizens.

For over five hundred years the Salters' Company have scrupulously administered the property entrusted to them for charitable purposes in the spirit of the instructions which accompanied the trusts. They have ever been forward in all good works, and we feel sure that no public bodies or private individuals more faithfully discharge the responsibilities which wealth entails than the Salters' Company.



MASTER'S CHAIR, MIDDLE OF 18TH CENTURY

## X

## THE IRONMONGERS' COMPANY

IT is interesting to trace the origin and development of the iron trade in our country. We know that the Romans were not slow in discovering the resources of their conquered province. They explored the iron mines and established foundries in various parts of the country. In Yorkshire, in the Forest of Dean, in the Weald of Sussex, and other places there are immense beds of cinders, the remains of ancient ironworks, in which Roman coins and pottery have been found. The art of working in metals was highly esteemed among the Anglo-Saxons, and the clergy seem to have been the most proficient artisans. Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury, was an expert smith, and Stigand and Ethelwold, both very worthy bishops, were celebrated for their mechanical skill. The numerous descendants of the family of Smith will be glad to hear that the chief Smith was a man of considerable distinction in the courts of the Anglo-Saxon kings, and his privileges and weregild exceeded those of any other craftsman. Then came the days of steel and iron armour, of Norman knights and grand tourneys, when burnished shields, and spears, and helmets shone brightly in the sunlight, while fetters were woven for the conquered English. In the time of Edward I. no fewer than seventy-two furnaces for smelting iron burned in the Forest of Dean.

The first mention of the Ironmongers of London occurs in the *Liber Horn*, an ancient manuscript preserved in the archives of the City of London, written by one Andrew Horn, chamberlain of the City. He writes that in 1300 a complaint was preferred by the *Ferones*, or dealers in iron, against the smiths of the Wealds for bringing down irons of wheels for carts to the City of London, which were much shorter than anciently

## THE CITY COMPANIES

was accustomed, to the great loss and scandal of the whole trade of ironmongers. Whereupon an inquisition was taken of lawful and honest men, who presented three rods of the just and anciently used lengths, sealed with the City seal ; and one was deposited in the Chamber of Guildhall, and the others delivered to John Dode and Robert de Paddington, ironmongers of the market, and to John de Wymondcham, ironmonger of the Bridge, who were empowered to seize those of undue length.

Ironmonger Lane still retains the memory of the earliest abode of the Ironmongers, who seem to have been both merchants and traders, for whilst they had large warehouses and yards, whence they exported and sold bar iron and iron rods, they had also shops, wherein they displayed abundance of manufactured articles, which they purchased of the workmen in town and country, and afterwards retailed. A large and flourishing industry like that of the Ironmongers would certainly have a guild in very early times, but of this we have no record until the reign of Edward III., when, in 1351, the Mayor sent a precept to the wardens of this and other guilds to assemble the “bones gentz” of their mystery for the purpose of electing four good men, the wisest and most sufficient, to treat with the Mayor, aldermen, and sheriffs upon some heavy business touching the state of the City. This “heavy business” was an alteration in the elective constituency of the assembly which ruled over the destinies of the City, whereby the right of suffrage was transferred from the inhabitants of the wards to the qualified members of the guilds.

In 1363 we notice that the Ironmongers contributed loyally to the support of the French wars. In 1410, when Sir Richard Marlow, citizen and ironmonger, was Lord Mayor, there was a play performed at Skinners' Hall, which lasted eight days, to hear which most of the greatest estates of England were present. The subject of the play was taken from Holy Scripture, and was called the Corpus Christi play. Although not yet incorporated, the Guild had become a powerful and influential body, and obtained, in the reign of Henry VI., a grant of armorial bearings from Lancaster King-of-Arms, which are thus described in the original

## THE IRONMONGERS' COMPANY

document :—“ Siluer, a cheueron of Gowles, sitte betwene three Gaddes of Stele of Azure, on the cheueron three swewells of golde ; with two lizards of their own kynde, encoupled with Gowlys, on the helmet.” This grant was subsequently confirmed by other heralds.

The first Charter was granted to the Company in 1463 by Edward IV., the merchant king, who, improving the theories of his ancestor, Edward III., the father of English commerce, amassed riches as a trader himself, and was enabled to defray the expenses of his government without calling upon his subjects for fresh subsidies. His ships were annually freighted with tin, wool, and cloth to the ports of Italy and Greece ; he enacted wise laws for the protection of trade, and his avowed object was to make London the principal mart of Europe. Owing to his wise rule, the English merchants accumulated riches easily. At the great fairs of Brabant, whither traders from all parts of the world resorted, they were the chief buyers and sellers, while at the same time their argosies were floating upon every sea. And nobly did they consecrate their wealth by offering a large part of it to the Giver of all good things. They gave large sums in charity, built churches, were liberal patrons of the arts, and many of our principal towns and cities were improved and poor people supported by their benefactions.

The earliest book the Ironmongers possess is a small folio of vellum entitled *A Book of Orders for the Companie*, which was begun in 1498, in the thirteenth year of Henry VII. One of the early entries exhibits Henry VIII. in his most despotic mood, and surpasses most of the other unjust demands made upon the Company's treasury by royal mandate. I have modernised the spelling :—“ 1523. King Harry the VIII., in the xijij year of his reign, borrowed of the City of London £23,000, of the which sum of money he commanded to have all the money and plate that was belonging to any hall or craft in London. To the intent that the money might be lent with the more ease. At the which commandment he had all our money belonging to our hall, that was the sum of £25, 14d. ; and also we sold at that time this parcel of plate hereafter followeth.”

## THE CITY COMPANIES

[Here is a list of plate, and also of fifty-four members of the Company who lent divers moneys for the rapacious king's use.]

The Company's first book of Wardens' Accounts begins in the year 1541, and contains many interesting records of their expenditure on royal pageants and processions. The attendance of the Company at the funerals of deceased members was always regarded as a duty, and state palls were always kept by the principal fraternities for the purpose of doing honour to their departed brethren. The state pall of the Ironmongers was originally a beautiful specimen of mediæval art, and on it are representations of angels and saints, but it has been sadly mutilated by injudicious restoration. Happily the Great Fire spared the hall and its contents.

If our space permitted, we should like to dwell on the attractive features of old London life as they are described in the valuable records of the Ironmongers' Company—the setting of the midsummer watch, the curious items in the accounts relating to “cressets, straw hats, barges, bundles of rushes, a skevener to rede owre writings, bowes and fflowrrs and rosses ;” but these we must reluctantly pass over. Again, in 1544, they were obliged to pledge some of their plate to provide “xvj men in harness to go over the sea with the King's army into France.” They redeemed their property bequeathed for “superstitious” uses, which was seized by the King at the Reformation. When coal began to be generally used in the Tudor times, coalmeters were appointed to see that just and true measure was delivered to the citizens of London. These useful personages were appointed by, and placed under the jurisdiction of, this Company.

Under the rule of the Tudor and Stuart sovereigns, the Company suffered much from the forced loans which were levied upon them. Mary required £666 for her French war, which ended in the loss of Calais, and from this period the extracting money from the City Companies became a regular source of supply to the Government, and was prosecuted with a greediness and injustice that scarcely left them time to breathe.

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One of the first events connected with the Company in the reign of Elizabeth is an Act for the preservation of timber by limiting its use for smelting iron. All trees growing within fourteen miles of the sea or of the principal rivers, being more than a foot square at the stub end, were ordered to be spared. Very magnificent pageants and Lord Mayor's shows took place during this period of our history, especially that of Sir Christopher Draper, who was Lord Mayor in 1566. The following item will give some idea of the extent of the preparation for this great event :—

"Agreed with John Candishe, habberdassher, the xxx<sup>th</sup> daie of September, a<sup>o</sup> 1565, that he shall finish the ffoiste in all points as hereafter followeth :—

"Imprimis, he to paie the charges of xx<sup>ty</sup> ores and the men to row them, with ij trompetters, a drom and a flute; xvij bases, whereof viij double and viij single; squibbes sufficient for the tyme, with all things well paynted and trymmed accordingly, with twenty pavases; and the said John Candishe to be paide for the same tenne pounds." Then follow a large number of items relating to dresses, caps, arms, torches, etc.

The pageant entitled "London's Tempe, or the Field of Happiness, in which field are planted several Trees of magnificent State and Bewty, to celebrate the Solemnity of the Right Honourable James Campbell at his inauguration into the office of Prætorship or Majoralty of London, 29th of October 1629," is remarkable. It was written by Thomas Dekker and contains "all the particular inventions for the Pageants, Showes of Triumph, both by Water and Land."

Oceanus, king of the ocean, appears in a marine chariot in the shell of a silver scollup, drawn by sea-horses; a sea-lion ridden by Tethys, queen of the sea, an ostridge (estridge) ridden by an Indian boy with costume proper to his country; the Lemnian Forge with Vulcan, and the cyclopes, who sing huskily—

## THE CITY COMPANIES

"Brave iron, brave hammer from your sound  
The art of music has been ground,"

and many other quaint conceits appear and delight the populace.

One entry in the books of the Company is remarkable, and shows an ingenious device by which they avoided any imputation of disloyalty. In 1579 a libellous book by Henry Stubbs appeared, which was directed against the proposed marriage between the Queen and the Duke of Anjou, and against which a proclamation was issued. It was thought that if any members of the Company were discovered to have in their possession a copy of this work, the Company might suffer. So it was devised that all the members should come to the hall on a certain day, and that there should be a secret place made in the court chamber, where every man should go and put in his hand and come down again, to the intent that such persons as had any of the seditious books should there let them fall; and, as but one man at a time went to the place, there was none to accuse him that had any book, and thus they armed themselves against any treasonable accusations.

The Company's records reveal the very important part they played in the protection of England from foreign foes. Again and again we find entries referring to the provision of men-at-arms well equipped with weapons for the Queen's service. They also furnished seamen and ships during the time of the invasion of the Armada, when every English heart was stirred and every arm raised to resist so mighty a foe. During the Civil War period their resources were severely drained. In 1640 they resolutely refused (in opposition to all the other Companies) to contribute a share of more than £50,000 (out of £200,000) demanded by Charles I. to defend him against the Parliament. Two years later they yielded, only by absolute compulsion, to pay their assessed quota (£3400) for the service of the Parliament. Again and again similar demands were made. They pleaded their inability, but in vain, and were obliged to sell all their plate to satisfy the rapacity of Parliament. Well might the worthy Ironmongers sigh for the moment to arrive "when these distracted and

## THE IRONMONGERS' COMPANY

troublesome tynes shall be quietly settled and appeased." The Great Fire spared their hall, but much of their property was destroyed, and their income seriously crippled. The storm raised by the *Quo warranto* proceedings of Charles II. was successfully weathered, and soon the Company rode safely forward on the less troubled waters of the eighteenth century.

Henceforth the court books of the Ironmongers' Company lose much of their historical interest; for, after the year 1688, their minutes refer chiefly to the ordinary affairs of the Company, and require little comment.

*The Hall and its Treasures.*—The site of the hall passed into the possession of the Ironmongers' Company in 1457 under the will of Alice Styward, who bequeathed to them all the lands, tenements, etc., opposite the highway of Aldgate Street in the parish of All Hallows', Staining. The existence of a hall soon after this is proved by an entry in the churchwardens' account of All Hallows', Staining, which runs as follows:—

"Paid for a kylderkyn of good ale, wiche was drunken in the Yrynmongers Hall, all charges born 12s. 2d." The hall was entirely rebuilt in Queen Elizabeth's time when the ancient one was found to be "ruinous and in great decay." The wardens' accounts furnish a very interesting record of the work done, the wages to the bricklayers, etc., and to the gardeners for laying out the garden.

The inventories are also well worthy of study for the student of the manners and customs of our forefathers. In 1643 the Parliamentary Committee asked that fifty barrels of gunpowder might be stored in the hall, but for divers and excellent reasons the request was decidedly refused. Although the hall was spared by the Great Fire, it was in considerable danger, as the flames very nearly reached it, and we find that the clerk employed men to keep watch in the vicinity for several nights, and took the precaution of removing the muniments, plate, and valuables to a place of safety. In 1673 the hall was used for divine service for the parish of All Hallows', Staining, as the church had fallen down. A few years later we find it was let to Mr Thomas Hatfield for the purpose of a lottery. In

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1750 the present hall was built, and it has subsequently been altered and improved at a considerable cost. The hall itself is very beautifully decorated and is one of the finest rooms in the City of London. The carving is very rich, and everywhere are seen the "lizards," the supporters of the arms of the Company. The arms of the past masters adorn the wainscoting, and carry us back to very early times. The earliest is the shield of Richard de Eure, 1351. Among the portraits of distinguished worthies we noticed : Thomas Lewen, Master in 1535, a benefactor of the Company and founder of some almshouses ; Sir W. Denham, seven times Master, 1531 ; Mrs Margaret Dane, a benefactress, 1579 ; Isaak Walton, the famous angler, a member of the Company in 1617 ; Sir James Cambell, Lord Mayor in 1629 ; Sir Robert Geffery, Lord Mayor, 1686 ; Sir Samuel Thorold, 1738 ; Sir Charles Price, Lord Mayor, 1803 ; Viscount Hood, by Gainsborough ; Viscount Exmouth, by Sir W. Beechy ; and Thomas Betton, a benefactor. A figure of the patron saint of the Company, St Laurence with the gridiron, is over the doorway. The drawing-room is embellished with Corinthian pillars, and handsomely furnished. The staircase is not so fine as the rest of the building. There is a good statue of William Beckford (1763), by Moore, and an immense figure of an ostrich, which formerly adorned the Company's barge.

In the court-room there are some interesting portraits : Nicholas Leat, Master in 1616 ; Thomas Michel, 1527 ; Thomas Thorold, 1634 ; John Nicholl, the historian of the Company, to whose work I am much indebted for much valuable information ; Rowland Heylin, 1614 ; John Child, 1786 ; Thomas Hanby, 1775 ; and a fine painting by Holl of the late S. Adams Beck, who was clerk of the Company 1834-83, and whose son, R. C. Adams Beck, is the present occupier of that honoured post. Plans for a new hall have now been prepared, and after this year (1903) the present hall will cease to be.

In spite of the numerous calls of necessity which have obliged the Company on several occasions to dispose of portions of their plate, they

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still possess a valuable and interesting collection, comprising two "hour-glass" salts, a mounted cocoanut, a wooden bowl mounted with a silver-gilt rim, bearing as an inscription the words of the Angel to the Virgin at the Annunciation, and the date 1527, and a similar bowl with plain rim. These are called mazer bowls, supposed to be derived from the Flemish *maeser*, signifying maple wood. The Lion loving cup is a fine specimen of art.

*Income, Charities and Expenditure.*—It is generally supposed that the City Companies are all fabulously rich, and have so much money that they really do not know how to spend their superfluous wealth. On account of the increased value of London property it is true that some of the Companies have large and increasing incomes, and I have already shown what excellent use they make of their riches; but other Companies are not so fortunate. Instead of increasing, their income is diminishing. A large amount of their corporate wealth is needed for the support of their trust property, and retrenchment and very careful management are needed to enable them to faithfully discharge their responsibilities. When, therefore, we observe that some Companies subscribe very largely for the support of popular movements, for technical education, and other worthy objects, while the names of others appear less frequently on subscription lists, we must not suppose that the latter are negligent in the discharge of their responsibilities. It is owing to lack of means and not to lack of generosity that they are unable to subscribe so largely.

The Ironmongers' Company are a case in point. They have a Trust Income, which amounts to about £11,000, while their gross Corporate Income does not exceed £12,000. Like many of the other Companies, they were induced by James I. to acquire certain estates in Ireland, which they disposed of under the first Land Act.

The most important of the many charities committed to the charge of the Company is that of Thomas Betton. His will is dated February 15th, 1723; and, after giving very minute instructions with regard to his tomb, he bequeathed the residue of his property to the Company for the follow-

## THE CITY COMPANIES

ing purposes :—(1) The redemption of British slaves in Turkey and Barbary ; (2) Grants to charity schools in the city and suburbs of London where education is according to the principles of the Church of England ; (3) An annual payment of £10 to the Chaplain of Sir Robert Geffery's almshouses and the repair of Betton's tomb ; and (4) the relief of poor freemen of the Company and their widows and children. The use of the first object of benevolence has now happily passed away. After the capture of Algiers by Lord Exmouth there were no longer any applications for assistance of British slaves ; the funds in consequence accumulated to a large extent ; and in 1829 an information was filed in the Court of Chancery for the purpose of having a scheme settled by the Court for the distribution of the fund. It was decided in 1845 that, after setting aside £7000 for the possible redemption of slaves in case of any application for that purpose, the rest of the funds should be divided amongst schools in England and Wales where the education is according to the principles of the Church of England. The funds of the educational branches of the charity at present yield about £6500. Under the Education Act, 1902, elementary education is to be provided for out of public funds. The Ironmongers' Company are therefore seeking wider powers for the future application of this fund for the benefit of "non-provided" schools, and the Church of England owes a great debt of gratitude to Thomas Betton for his noble charity, and to the Ironmongers' Company for their able management of the funds committed to their care.

Another important charity is that of Sir Robert Geffery, knight, who, by his will dated 10th February, 1703, left divers estates to the Company for the following purposes :—(1) The reading of prayers twice daily in the Church of St Dionis Backchurch ; but, the church having been pulled down in 1876, this portion of the charity has now passed under the testator's will to the Royal Hospitals of Bridewell and Bethlem ; (2) To provide a weekly gift of bread to the poor inhabitants of the parish of Landrake with St Erney, Cornwall, and the salary of a person to teach the children of the poor inhabitants to read and write and the Church

## THE IRONMONGERS' COMPANY

Catechism ; (3) To erect almshouses for so many poor people as his property would extend to pay £6 per annum each, and 15s. yearly for a gown ; these pensions, by improvement in the value of the trust property, owing to the Company's careful management, have been increased to £12 each. The income of this charity is now about £1500 per annum. In accordance with the instructions of the testator, a suitable piece of land was purchased in Kingsland Road, and fourteen almshouses and a chapel were erected for the reception of the almsfolk. The Company largely supplement the funds of the charity in order to provide good nursing and increased comforts for the inmates in their old age and times of sickness. In 1877 the Landrake School was rebuilt to accommodate 150 children, on a piece of ground given by the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe. The school, carried on since 1877 in accordance with a scheme under the Endowed Schools Acts, has since the 1st of October 1903 been transferred to a body of managers appointed under the Education Act, 1902.

The minor charities administered by the Company are so numerous that it will be impossible to mention all in detail, and we can only allude to the more important. The oldest bequest is that of Thomas Lewen (1555), who left certain messuages in Bread Street Hill to the Company on condition that they would find "an honest priest to perform mass for the peace of his soul ; permit four honest, sad, impotent, poor, aged, and decayed men of their craft to reside in four of the houses ; pay fifty shillings yearly to two poor scholars, one at Oxford and one at Cambridge, and to pay £5 yearly to friars within the realm." The houses in Bread Street Hill being destroyed in the Fire of London, the Company erected four others on their own estate in Old Street, which again were burnt down in 1785. A large sum was paid to Edward VI. for the redemption of the charges for obits under this and other wills.

Within the last forty years members of the Court—Mr Thomas Howard, Mr C. C. Luckcombe, and Mr W. H. Westwood (all since deceased), Mr H. Rokeby Price and Sir Edwin Durning Lawrence, Bart.,—have all founded valuable charities under the administration of the

## THE CITY COMPANIES

Company, mainly for the benefit of poorer members of the Guild ; thus showing the confidence felt by those who are intimately acquainted with the administration of the Company that their wishes, now and in the future, as in the past, will be faithfully and ably carried out by the Court.

Mr Noel Whiting (Master in 1881), who died on the 6th of July 1903, has also bequeathed to the Master for the time being £10,000, to be applied for the benefit of the Company in such manner as shall be determined by the Court.

Under the head of exhibitions, we find that Thomas Hallwood, in 1622, bequeathed £4 each to four poor scholars, students in divinity, and residents, two at Oxford and two at Cambridge. Lewen's exhibitions we have already mentioned. William Chapman, in 1579, gave two exhibitions of £5 each to two poor students of divinity at Oriel College, Oxford, until thirty years of age. Mrs Margaret Dane gave, amongst other gifts, a similar bequest to a poor scholar at Merton College, Oxford, and at St Peter's College, Cambridge.

The Company, though having no technical school of their own, have from the outset supported technical education. They have, from its establishment, annually subscribed to the maintenance of the City and Guilds Institute for the advancement of Technical Education at South Kensington. In 1861 they expended £1000 in an exhibition of works of art, ancient and modern, at their hall, which was admitted on all hands to be the most perfect that had ever been gathered together in this country, and has never since been surpassed. Queen Victoria was an exhibitor, and Prince Consort honoured the exhibition by a visit, and it was from this memorable display that the Loan Collection of Works of Art at South Kensington took its rise shortly after.

Many of the freemen of the Company are in reduced circumstances, and depend largely upon the Company for support. Poverty is often most keenly felt by those who once were in affluent circumstances and have lost their means of livelihood. Unfortunate tradespeople, the widows and daughters of decayed members of the middle class and others, find in the

## THE IRONMONGERS' COMPANY

Company a sympathising friend who rescues them from want and starvation, and prevents them from going to the workhouse, and from falling under the domination of Poor Law administration.

The Court is composed of gentlemen who are specially qualified for highly organised administrative work, comprising members of the medical and legal professions, bankers, merchants, and others connected with various businesses, many of them being landed proprietors ; and their varied pursuits and knowledge are useful in enabling them to transact the affairs of the Company.

The Company have passed through very troublous and stormy periods. Their plate has been taken from them ; members have been imprisoned in order to compel them to contribute to some forced loan or unjust exactment ; but through all their troubles the Company still flourishes. "J'y suis et j'y reste," it might take for its motto, and we trust that the truth of that motto may never be falsified.

## XI

## THE VINTNERS' COMPANY

THE annals of the Vintners' Company have been ably set forth by Mr Thomas Milbourn, and, by the courtesy of the Master and the Clerk, I am enabled to avail myself of his work entitled *The Vintners' Company, their Muniments, Plate, and Eminent Members, with some Account of the Ward of Vintry*. We find that this Company ranks eleventh upon the list in the order in which it appears in the City records. It received its Charter of Incorporation as a company, having a common seal and power to purchase lands, tenements, and rents within the City of London and its suburbs, to the value of £20, from King Henry VI. in the year 1437, and thus looks back on a corporate existence of four centuries and a half.

The Vintners were called the Merchant Wine-Tonners of Gascoyne, and were divided into two classes, the Vinetarii and the Tabernarii. The former were importers of wine, and resided in stately stone houses adjoining the wine wharves, such as Picard's Mansion in Three Cranes Lane, Stodeye's in Broad Lane, and Gysors', both at the Vintry and Gysors' Hall. The latter, or Tabernarii, were the tavern, inn, or cook-house keepers.

The Company of the Vintners exercised important powers over both the importation and sale of wines, as well as the licensing of taverns, together with other rights and privileges, upon which considerable light has been thrown by the extracts from the records of the Corporation of the City of London and other sources, which have been collected by the editor of the above-mentioned work and his contributors.

It is not necessary to allude in this place to the antiquity of the wine

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trade in this country, to tell how the Romans and Saxons had their vineyards here, how the marriage of our Henry II. with Eleanor of Aquitaine laid the foundations of our traffic for wines with Bordeaux, nor to mention the various kinds of wines—the sack, canary, Malmsey, and other vintages—which pleased the palates of our forefathers. Nor are we called upon to decide between Elkanah Settle's eulogy of the vine in his dedication to one of the Vintners' Lord Mayor's pageants—wherein he states that “it is the most favourite plant of the whole creation, the rich and fruitful parent of so generous a product”—and the denunciations of the total abstainer. The worthy Elkanah himself lauds only “the rightful and genuine use of the juice of the vine,” and is of opinion that “cordials themselves in excess may be fatal.” But a discussion of the use and abuse of spirituous liquors lies outside our present purpose. Nevertheless, it may be pointed out that the monopoly which the Vintners Company enjoyed, and the strict control they exercised upon their members, the tavern-keepers, must have tended to prevent intemperance. The Company regarded the claims for new licences with quite as much circumspection as the strictest magisterial bench, albeit they were considering their own interests.

With regard to the antiquity of the Vintners' Company, it may be noticed that although it received its charter of incorporation from Henry VI., yet it is evident from various ancient records that it was in existence many years previously. Edward I. granted Botolph Wharf, near Billingsgate, to the Vintners, for the landing of their tuns of wine; and, indeed, they were somewhat entitled to royal favour, inasmuch as by right of the King's prisage he could appropriate a certain number of tuns for his own use out of every cargo imported. At this time we know that they were a Company of considerable importance; the Vinetarii contributed a much larger sum than most of the other Companies to the French wars, and shortly afterwards they sent as many as six members to the Common Council of the City, and thus equalled in the number of their representatives the greatest Companies.

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Very curious are some of the early regulations for preventing fraud. In the thirteenth century we find "early closing" in force, no taverner being allowed to keep his door open after Curfew-ring under a penalty of half a mark. All customers must be able to see their wine drawn from the cask ; so no taverner might have a cloth hung before the door of his cellar ; they were to sell by sealed measure, and severe penalties were enforced from any one who sold putrid wines, or mixed corrupt wine with that which was pure and good. Thus, in 1364, "John Rightways and John Penrose, taverners, were charged with trespass in the tavern of William Doget, in Estchepe, on the eve of St Martin, and there selling unsound and unwholesome wines, to the deceit of the common people, the contempt of the King, to the shameful disgrace of the officers of the City, and to the grievous damage of the commonalty. John Rightways was discharged, and John Penrose found guilty ; he was to be imprisoned a year and a day, to drink a draught of the bad wine, and the rest to be poured over his head, and to forswear the calling of a vintner in the City of London for ever." Another pleasant method was to place the casks of condemned wine in the streets, break their heads, and cause the liquor to run through the city, like a stream of rain-water, in the sight of all the people, whence there often issued a most loathsome savour.

In 1447 a coat of arms was granted to the Company by Clarenceux, King-of-Arms, "Sable, a chevron between three tuns argent."

The Company possess a large number of Charters granted by the kings and queens of England, beginning with that of Henry VI., to which we have already alluded, and of which the following is the text :—

"CHARTER, 15TH KING HENRY 6TH, DATED 23RD AUGUST, 1437.

"Henry, by the grace of God, King of England and France, and Lord of Ireland, to all to whom these presents shall come, greeting : Know ye that we, of our special grace, have granted to the freemen of the mistery of Vintners of the City of London, that the mistery aforesaid, and all



'Grand Room of the Victoria Company,  
Drawing-Room of William Morris.'



## THE VINTNERS' COMPANY

men of the same from henceforth may and shall be in deed, and in name, one body, and one perpetual Company, and that the same Company every year shall and may chuse, and make out of themselves, four masters or wardens, to oversee, rule, and govern the mistery and commonalty aforesaid, and all men and business of the same for ever, and that the same masters, or wardens, and commonalty shall and may have perpetual succession, and a common seal, to serve for the business of the said commonalty, and that they and their successors for ever shall and may be persons able and capable in law to purchase and possess in fee, perpetuity, lands, tenements, rents, and other possessions whatsoever ; and that they the wardens by the name of the master or wardens of the commonalty and mistery of Vintners aforesaid, shall and may be able to implead and be impleaded before any judges whatsoever in any Courts and actions whatsoever. And further, of our more abundant grace, we have granted that the masters, or wardens, and commonalty of the said mistery shall and may be able to purchase lands, tenements, and rents within the City of London, and suburbs of the same, which are held of us, to the value of twenty pounds a year, to be had and holden to them and their successors for ever, towards the better support as well of the poor men of the said commonalty as of one chapel, to celebrate divine service for ever daily, for our state whilst we live, and for our soul when we are departed, and for the souls of all our ancestors, as also for the state and souls of the men of the said mistery and commonalty, and the souls of all the faithful deceased, according to the ordinances of the said masters, or wardens, and commonalty in this behalf to be made, the statute of lands and tenements not to be purchased in mortmain, made, or to be ordained notwithstanding. In witness whereof we have caused these our letters to be made patents. Witness ourself at our Castle of Kenilworth, the twenty-third day of August, in the fifteenth year of our reign."

It appears that the Company had the power of punishing refractory members, for in 1609 "it is ordered that a pair of stocks shall be pro-

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vided and placed in the Common Hall of the Company, and that the offenders shall sit therein for one whole hour in the view and sight of the whole assembly."

The price of commodities was usually fixed by proclamation, and wine was no exception to this rule. Early in the fourteenth century it was ordered "that the gallon of wine shall be sold for 3d." A century later Rhenish wines were 8d. per gallon; Red wine, 6d.; Malvezie, a Greek wine, 16d.; Crete and Provence, 12d. In the time of Edward VI. an effort was made to restrict the number of taverns, and it was ordered that the number of tavern-keepers should be limited to forty, in York to eight, and in other cities and towns in proportion. This act was considered injurious and ruinous to the vintners, and efforts were made with success in the succeeding reign to remove these obnoxious restrictions from the statute-book. Modern efforts in the same direction for restricting the number of houses wherein drink is sold have as yet not been more successful than they were in the reign of Edward VI. Moreover, we find that a few years later the pendulum swung too much the other way, and great complaints were made to Queen Elizabeth by the honest vintners because "large multitudes did daily set up taverns, not only such as neither were nor ought to be allowed by the said licence, but also foreigners and strangers, and in excessive numbers, to the great hurt of the common weal and the manifest peril of bringing the whole licence into question." So the monopoly of the vintners was again safeguarded.

The Vintners' Company were very careful about the granting of new licences. In 1629 we find the Warden and others visiting the house of a certain Nicholas Banaster, which was intended for a tavern; but they found the same unfit to be tolerated in regard to the situation thereof, being near certain alleys, in a back place, and having a bowling-alley and pair of butts, where poor people will spend their thrift and cause brawls.

Charles I. received £6000 from the Company in consideration for certain privileges, and various petitions from the Company show that

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their trade was heavily taxed, and furnished a goodly income for the royal exchequer. The Vintners yielded up their Charters on account of the *Quo warranto* proceedings of Charles II., but happily their rights and privileges were fully restored to them by James II. and confirmed by William III. Since that exciting period their history has been smooth and uneventful.

*Hall and Treasures.*—That part of London which was inhabited by the Vintners, called the Vintry, occupied “a part of the bank of the River of Thames where the merchants of Burdeaux craned their wines out of Lighters and other Vessels, and there landed and made sale of them within forty days after, until the 28th of Edward I., since which time many fair and large houses, with vaults and cellars for stowage of wines, and lodging of the Burdeaux merchants, have been builded in place where before were cook's houses. Sir John Stodie, vintner, in the year 1357, gave it with all the quadrant wherein Vintner's Hall now stands, with the tenements round about, unto the Vintners; the Vintners builded for themselves a fair hall, and also thirteen almshouses for thirteen poor people which are kept of charity rent free.” Thus far the worthy chroniclers of ancient London (Stow and his continuator Strype) narrate.

This hall was destroyed by the Great Fire, after which the Company held their meetings at the “Bell” Inn, in St Nicholas Lane, but subsequently removed to the “Fleece,” in Cornhill. The hall was then rebuilt, partially on the old foundations, by subscriptions raised among the members of the Company, and their first meeting was held in the present building on April 10th, 1671. Other houses were erected adjoining the hall, and were let by the Company; but these were pulled down when Thames Street was widened. The *New View of London* (1708) thus describes Vintners' Hall:—“It is situated on the south side of Thames Street, near Queen Street, and is well built of brick, and large and commodious. The room called the hall is paved with marble, and the walls richly wainscoted with right wainscot, enriched with fruit-

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leaves, etc., finely carved, as is more especially the noble screen at the east end, where the aperture into the hall is adorned with columns, their entablature and pitched pediment; and on acrosters are placed the figures of Bacchus between several fawns, and these between two panthers; and there are other carved figures, as St Martin, their patron, and the cripple, and pilasters; there are also other embellishments of several coats of arms."

When I visited the hall of the Vintners I was struck with the beauty of the carvings above-mentioned. The hall is adorned with the richly-decorated banners of St Martin and of the Company, and there is a tablet on which are enrolled the names of the distinguished members of the Company who have had the honour of being Lord Mayors of London. This list carries us back to very early times, for we find the name of John Adrian who was Mayor in the years 1270 and 1271. There is also the fine old Master's Chair, which has been in use for many centuries, as it was saved from the destructive Fire of London. The court-room is adorned with rich and beautiful carvings by Grinling Gibbons, and with the following paintings: "St Martin dividing his coat with the Beggar," by Rubens, and portraits of Charles II., James II., Sir Thomas Rawlinson, Master (1696), John H. Pocock (1830), Alderman Lucas (1817), J. Wright (1797), William III. and Queen Mary. The modern drawing-room is richly furnished in blue silk; the fireplace is magnificently carved with figures of sporting Bacchus and bunches of grapes. Amongst other treasures we notice a fine old plan of the Irish estates of the Company, a petition to Cromwell, which bears the writing of the Lord Protector, a plan of the Boxley Estate, the charter of James II. A noble vintner, Sir Henry Picard, who was Lord Mayor in 1356, and Master in 1363, had the unique and distinguished honour of entertaining five kings, namely, Edward III. of England, David of Scotland, John of France, the King of Denmark, and the King of Cyprus. After dinner they played at dice and hazard, and when the King of Cyprus, playing with Picard, lost fifty marks, His Majesty took it in ill part. But Picard said, "My Lord, be not

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aggrieved ; I covet not your gold, but your play ; for I have not bidde you hither that I might grieve you, but that amongst other things I might try your play," and gave him his money again. The custom of drinking the toast of "Prosperity to the Vintners' Company" with five cheers, is said to be observed in memory of the visit of these five kings.

One of the most valued treasures which the Vintners possess is a piece of ancient tapestry, which is one of the greatest curiosities of its kind in this country. Whether it was manufactured at home or abroad is uncertain, but its date cannot be later than 1466, and it was originally intended as a reredos of an altar. It is divided into two compartments of equal size. On the left we see St Martin on horseback, cutting in two his cloak with his sword to share it with a beggar man ; and on the right is St Dunstan, saying mass, and listening in ecstasy to an angel-choir singing the *Kyrie*, with additional words and to an air before unknown. A scroll held by two angels reveals the notation of the music, which is still to be found in the Sarum Missal as St Dunstan's *Kyrie*. A monk, holding the archbishop's cross, stands behind the saint, and the people are waiting in surprise at the long pause in the service, for the angels' song is by them unheard. The black-letter inscription below desires the prayers of the faithful for the souls of John Bate and Johanna his wife, and states that it was given, in the year 1466, by their son, Walter Hertford, who was a monk of Christchurch, Canterbury. It is probably of English manufacture, but it is not known how it came into the possession of the Company.

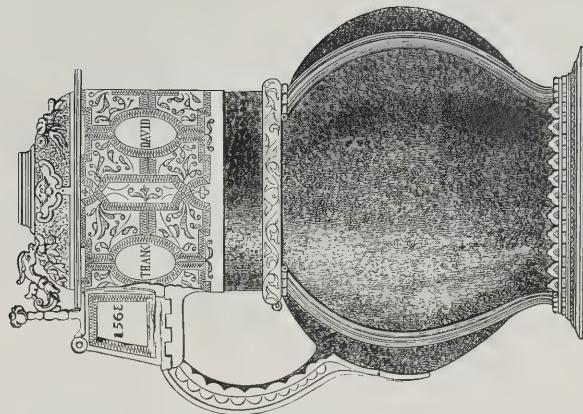
Only six of all the Companies have preserved their funeral state pall, or hearse cloth. The Vintners still possess this interesting reminiscence of former days. It is made of cloth of gold, with purple velvet pile. Figures of St Martin as a soldier, and as Bishop of Tours, in each case with the familiar beggar man, the Virgin holding the dead body of our Saviour, and of Death, adorn the sides. A rich tracery pattern occupies the centre of the pall.

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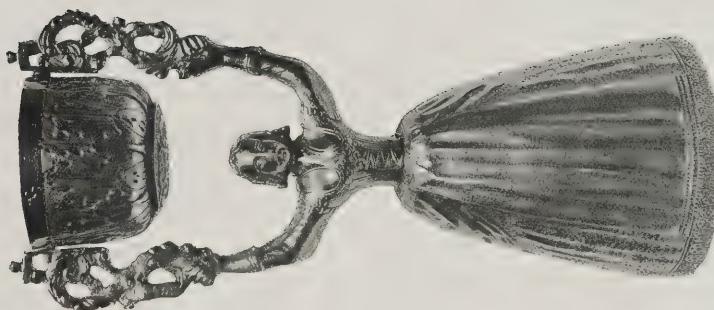
The Vintners' Company have reason to mourn the loss of much valuable plate which was sold at various periods of their history to satisfy the demands of the rapacious Tudor and Stuart sovereigns, who "borrowed" so frequently from the coffers of the Company, and, like Sir John Falstaff, "did not like that paying back, 'tis a double labour." A list of plate formerly owned by the Company was recently discovered among their archives, which shows what a valuable store of ancient plate they once possessed. Their earliest specimens are a cocoa-nut cup (1518) mounted in silver gilt, and a delft tankard (1563), bearing the motto "Think and Thank," and also "Thank David Gitting for <sup>is</sup> <sub>y.</sub>" Anthony Pawle gave two pieces of plate in 1638 to His Majesty's Wine Porters. The Milkmaid Cup is a curious and interesting example of the quaint fashions which were sometimes adopted for drinking vessels, and in this instance no doubt much merriment has resounded through the banqueting hall from its use. It is in the shape of a female, whose petticoat forms the cup; she holds in her uplifted hands another smaller vessel, which turns on pivots. Both vessels are filled, and some skill is required to empty one without spilling the contents of the other. There are many other splendid specimens of plate of later work, which want of space forbids us to mention.

Amongst the distinguished members of the Company we may mention, in addition to John Adrian and Henry Pycard, the worthy entertainer of five royal guests, Sir John Stodeye, Mayor in 1357; Sir James Spencer, in 1527; Sir Cuthbert Buckle, in 1593; Sir Thomas Bloodworth, who was Mayor during the Great Fire (according to Pepys, "a silly man, I think"); Sir Gilbert Heathcote, in 1710; Sir Francis Wyatt Truscott, Lord Mayor in 1879, the last member of the Company who has attained to that high dignity, His Royal Highness the late Duke of Albany; and a great benefactor of the Company, Benjamin Kenton, who rose from very lowly beginnings to a position of great wealth and usefulness.

The Vintners have possessed from time immemorial the privilege of keeping a number of swans on the River Thames. The earliest records



STONEWARE JUG, 1562  
At Vintners' Hall



MILKMAID'S CUP  
At Vintners' Hall



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relating to this right date back to the year 1509, when certain expenses are mentioned for "Upping of Swans." Once a year an expedition is made by the Vintners' swan herdsman, together with the herdsmen of His Majesty and the Dyers' Company, and the cygnets are marked by nicks on their bill, in order to distinguish them. No one is allowed to have a swan-mark unless by order of the sovereign, and its possession has always been esteemed a token of high rank and dignity.

*Income, Charities and Expenditure.*—The Vintners' Company is the least wealthy of all the great Companies of London. Its total income in 1880 amounted to £11,000, a very little more than half of that of the Iron-mongers' and Salters', who come next in order of magnitude. Their Trust Funds amounted to £1500, and their Corporate Income to £9500. The remarks which we have previously made with regard to the varied circumstances of the different Companies apply, therefore, in the present instance; nor can we expect to find so full a record of mighty schemes of benevolent enterprise as in the case of some of the other Companies which are endowed with larger means for the carrying on of good works.

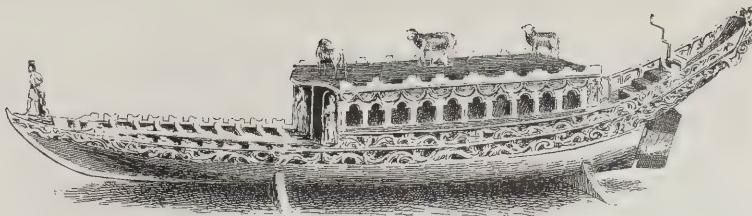
The Vintners' Company have no very troublesome and costly charitable schemes entrusted to their care by the pious benefactors of olden days. They have no schools to manage, and to rebuild again and again when time, or changed manners, or increased requirements necessitated the erection of new buildings. They have no University Scholarships to present to deserving youths, and to supplement by adding £60 or £80 a year to the modest sums bequeathed by former worthies at a time when the expenses of University life were not so heavy as they are at the present day.

They have, however, a set of almshouses called the Vintners' Almshouses, on the north side of the Mile End Road. These are twelve in number, with a chapel for Divine service. They are the lineal descendants of certain "little mansions" adjoining the old Vintners' Hall, which Guy Shuldam devised to the Company, in the year of grace 1446, for the purpose of affording a home for thirteen poor and needy men or women

## THE CITY COMPANIES

of the said craft. He also directed that the master and wardens should take nothing from the said poor people for the rent of the said dwellings. Moreover, he bequeathed certain lands and tenements, from the profits of which the poor people were to receive 4s. 4d. a year each, to wit, for every week one penny. These buildings occupied a part of the site of the present hall, and were destroyed together with the hall in the Great Fire. The almshouses were not rebuilt on the same site, but others were erected in their stead in the Mile End Road. These were pulled down at the beginning of the last century, and rebuilt by the munificence of Benjamin Kenton, who bequeathed £2050 for the purpose, and also £200 for investment, the income thus accruing to be given for the payment of an annual preacher, and to the almsfolk. The almshouses are very comfortable; each consists of a parlour, bedroom, and other conveniences. Under the chapel there is a large kitchen for the common use of the almswomen, and a garden, the produce of which is divided among them. The Company give one guinea yearly, as Mr Kenton's gift, to each of the almsfolk, which sum is considerably more than the bequest of the generous donor.

Several other worthy benefactors have left various gifts to the fortunate almswomen, and amongst them we notice the names of Flower, Tomlinson, Gale, Jacob, Mallow, Pierpoint and Kennett. The poor people in the Vintners' Almshouses do not therefore lack comfort.



MODEL OF BARGE FORMERLY USED BY COMPANY IN CIVIC PROCESSIONS

X I.I

THE CLOTHWORKERS' COMPANY

ELKANAH SETTLE, who seems to have been an adept at cunningly devising phrases, tells us that “the grandeur of England is to be attributed to its golden fleece, the wealth of the loom making England a second Peru, and the back of the sheep, and not the entrails of the earth, being its chief mine of riches. The silkworm is no spinster of ours, and our wheel and webb are wholly the clothworkers. Thus, as trade is the soul of the kingdom, so the greatest branch of it lies in the clothworkers’ hands ; and, though our naval commerce bring us in both the *or* and the *argent*, and, indeed, the whole wealth of the world, yet, when thoroughly examined, it will be found ’tis your cloth sends out to fetch them. And thus, whilst the imperial Britannia is so formidable to her foes, and so potent to her friends, her strength and her power, when duly considered, to the Clothworkers’ honour it may justly be said, ’tis your shuttle nerves her arm and your woof that enrobes her glory.” Thus does Master Settle ennoble and glorify this ancient Company, and not without reason. When we regard its ancient, distinguished history, and its present princely support of all schemes of public utility, and especially in connection with the textile industries, we feel sure that the Company commands the admiration of the nation and the gratitude of all persons for whose benefit its benevolence is exerted.

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The ancient history of this Company is to be sought for in that of several fraternities, the members of which were connected in different ways with the manufacture of cloth. It was formed by the union of two Guilds, the Fullers and the Sheermen. The craft of Fullers and the fraternity of Sheermen arose out of an association of persons subsidiary to the ancient Guild of Tellarii, or woollen weavers, together with the burrellers\* and testers, all being associations of persons connected with the fabrication, finishing, or vending of cloth. The latter guilds were subsequently absorbed into the Drapers' and Merchant Taylors' Companies.

In the time of Henry VI., one John Badby did demise unto John Hungerford and others, citizens and Sheermen of London, a tenement and mansion-house, shops, cellars, and other appurtenances, lying in Minchin Lane, now Clothworkers' Hall, to the use of themselves and their heirs for ever.

We find that Edward IV. granted to his beloved lieges to found, to the praise and honour of God, and the most glorious Virgin Mary, His Mother, a certain fraternity or perpetual guild of the men of the mystery of Fullers. The followers of this craft lived in the district where Whitechapel Church now stands, that parish having been called "Villa Beata Maria de Matfellon," a designation probably derived from the fact of the herb called "matfellon" (Fullers' Teasel), used extensively by the fullers inhabiting that quarter, growing in a field hard by where their tenter grounds were situate. Fullers' Hall was in Billiter Street. Unto his beloved lieges, the men of the mystery of Sheermen, King Henry VII. granted a charter of incorporation; and his successor united the two Guilds of Fullers and Sheermen, and gave them a charter which grants that the said mysteries shall thenceforward become one entire art or mystery, and that they shall be in future one perpetual commonalty by the name of clothworkers only, and no other. Their complete title

\* The burrellers derived their name from the duties which they discharged with regard to inspecting and measuring cloth. The width of cloth was ordered to be two ells wide from list to list, which were termed *burrells*.

## THE CLOTHWORKERS' COMPANY

was, "The Master, Wardens, and Commonalty of the Mystery of Clothworkers in the City of London." The Charter confirmed to them all the rights and privileges enjoyed by the two former guilds, gave them power to wear a livery, to have their annual feast, and also to exercise a trade search.

Thus the Clothworkers' Company commenced its corporate existence. Its government and constitution resemble closely those of the other companies which we have already described, and therefore require no further account here. It may, however, be remarked that the management of the property of the Company and the entire government were always vested in the Master, Wardens, and Livery, as distinguished from the general body of free men and free women (for females have been always entitled to the freedom of the Company); but the latter were allowed the use of the hall for their sports, recreations, and assemblies, "upon their good abaring to the Masters, Wardens, and Fellowship." A long-standing dispute between this Company and the Dyers' with regard to precedence in the Lord Mayor's processions was amicably settled in 1518 by order of the worthy Knight, Sir William Boteler, Lord Mayor, who arranged that the Sheermen should ride first, and that the Dyers should lovingly and charitably follow the Fellowship of Sheermen without any further strife or debate.

The history of the Company does not appear to have been an exciting one; but since its foundation it has continued to carry on its useful mission for the mutual help and benefit of its associated members, for the protection of the trade or manufacture of clothworking, and since this latter function ceased to exist and trade societies and protection became things of the past, the Company has devoted its wealth to the public good, and in carrying out the important trusts committed to its care.

Among the Masters of the Company have been many distinguished persons, Lord Mayors, Aldermen, and Sheriffs of London, and amongst them Sir Edward Osborne, Lord Mayor in 1583, an ancestor of the Duke of Leeds, and the Hon. Samuel Pepys, Secretary to the Admiralty, so

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well known by his invaluable Diary, who presented the Company with a beautiful loving cup, which was much admired at the first International Exhibition of 1851.

King James I. was made a Freeman of the Company in 1607, when he was entertained at the hall, and it is recorded “that His Majesty was then pleased to drink to the Lord Mayor, Sir William Stone, and the rest of the Company, by the name of his good brethren, the Clothworkers, praying to God to bless all good clothworkers and all good clothwearers.”



SAMUEL PEPYS'S LOVING CUP

The present hall is worthy of the Company's greatness. The entrance is very fine; a wide stone staircase leads to the hall itself, and the roof is supported by Corinthian pillars. In the binding-room, where men and women are made free of the Company, there are copies of the documents conferring the freedom of the Company on Prince Albert, the late Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Leeds, Baroness Burdett-Coutts, Lord Kelvin, the late Lord Dufferin, the late Rt. Hon. W. E. Forster, and other distinguished members. The court-rooms contain portraits of Sir William Hewett, Lord Mayor in 1559; Sir J. Musgrove, Lord Mayor in 1851; William Lambe, Master in 1569, the founder of

## THE CLOTHWORKERS' COMPANY

the Grammar School at Sutton Valence ; Sir Edward Osborne, Lord Mayor in 1583 ; Thomas William Wing, who so late as 1889 left the noble bequest of £70,000 for blind pensions ; Sir Owen Roberts, F.S.A., the present esteemed Clerk of the Company, whose name is associated with so many schemes of public benevolence and educational enterprise. In one of the windows are the arms of Samuel Pepys, Master in 1677 ; Sir Joseph Williamson, Secretary of State in 1676 ; and William Hewers, Master in 1686.

The hall itself, built in 1859, is a noble building, lighted by fine windows, containing the arms of distinguished members. There are statues of James I. and Charles I. Massive pillars support the arches in the roof, and above the curved parts of the ceiling are adorned with paintings. The whole appearance of this magnificent room is grand and imposing.

Happily the Great Fire spared some of the old books of the Company, and we extract some interesting items from the Wardens' accounts, which illustrate some of the chief public objects to which the Company subscribed in former times : “ 1553-4. Towards suppression of Sir Thomas Wyatt's rebellion, £28, 10s. 4d.” Various sums were voted in 1555-7 towards “ setting forth of soldiers about the Queen's affairs and business.” The insecurity of the persons of Queen Mary and her Spanish husband is shown by the vote of £47 for the defence of the King and Queen's majesties. Then came the more joyful days of Queen Elizabeth, when £137 is given for a show before the Queen at Greenwich. The rejoicings of the Restoration are set forth in the entry :—

“ 1660. Thanksgiving at S. Paul's 5 May 1660 to put out and remove the Arms of the Commonwealth from all things belonging to the Company, and to set in their stead the Arms of His Majesty.

“ 1661. Proportion for Building the Pageants on the King's passing through the City from the Tower to Whitehall, £530.”

Then follow a voluntary present to His Majesty of £200 ; towards

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building the ship the *Loyal London*, £400; redeeming Barbary slaves, £20. As early as 1752 the Company subscribed £21 for foreign missions (S.P.G.), and in 1762 they gave £31 for the purpose of translating the Bible into Manx. Poor folk, the sufferers by fire or hurricane, the defence of the country, hospitals, Marine Society, and many others are recorded as worthy objects of the charity of the Company. The list of these old benefactions closes with the following :—

“ 1815. Relief and Benefit of the Families of the Brave men killed and the wounded sufferers of the British Army under the command of the Illustrious Wellington in the signal battle of Waterloo, £210.”

The disastrous period of the Civil War made sad havoc of the wealth of the Company, and caused them, in 1643, to sell almost all their ancient plate. A melancholy Court minute records the misfortunes of the times, and runs as follows :—

“ *Court, September 7th, 1643.*—This day also, this Court, taking into their sad and serious consideration the many great, pressing, and urgent occasions which they have for money as well for the payment of their debts as otherwise, and considering the danger this city is in by reason of the great distractions and civil wars of this kingdom, have thought fit and so ordered that the stock of plate which this Company hath shall be forthwith sold at the best rate that will be given for the same. It was, moreover, ordered that before the same be sold they cause a particular to be made in writing particularly of all the said parcells of plate so to be sold, with the fashion, the weight, and the several donors’ names, to the end that the same may be repaired and made good *in statu quo*, when God shall enable this Company so to do.” A subsequent Court minute shows that 2068 ounces of plate were sold, which realised £520, and 1239 ounces were retained for the use of the Company.

It is satisfactory to note that the intentions of the distressed members in 1643 have been recently carried out, a salver having been purchased



CAUDLE CUP, 1654  
At Clothworkers' Hall



SALT, 1661  
At Clothworkers' Hall



## THE CLOTHWORKERS' COMPANY

whereon are engraved the names of the donors of the plate then sold. Collectors of ancient plate would regard with longing eyes the list of bowls and standing cups and salts, etc., which were then sacrificed. Happily some articles are still in the possession of the Company, notably a rosewater dish given by John Burnell, Master in 1593, and of modern plate they have a goodly store of rare and valuable specimens of cunning workmanship. The fine cup presented by Samuel Pepys is still in their possession.

*Income, Charities and Expenditure.*—After this brief account of the history and treasures of the Clothworkers' Company, we now turn our attention to their financial position, and to the many good works which they support. They are fortunate enough to possess the large Corporate Income of £42,000. Their charitable trusts amount nearly to £18,000, so that their total income is close on £60,000.

The City Companies contribute largely to the Imperial revenue, and are somewhat heavily assessed. Towards Imperial taxation, which includes property tax and succession duty, the Clothworkers' Company pay £5000 per annum, in addition to more than £1000 for local taxation.

The promotion and encouragement of education in its various branches appear to be an important feature of the Company's work. They award numerous exhibitions and scholarships as the result of open competitive examinations in connection with respective colleges. Some eleemosynary exhibitions are attached to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge for "poor students studying divinity," viz., non-collegiate students.

The higher education of women is also encouraged by scholarships in connection with Somerville Hall, Oxford; Girton College and Newnham College, Cambridge; Maria Grey Training College; Royal Female School of Art; North London Collegiate and Camden Schools for Girls; and the Islington High Schools for Girls.

In the promotion of technical education the Company takes a prominent lead. The Clothworkers' wing of the Yorkshire College, Leeds, comprising the textile industries, dyeing and art departments, has been

## THE CITY COMPANIES

built and equipped by the Company at an expense of £70,000, and is maintained by them at an annual cost of £4000.

The Company has subscribed to the building and maintenance of other technical colleges and schools in various parts of the country, and amongst their educational grants we notice that they have given nearly £100,000 to the City and Guilds of London Institute for the advancement of technical education, their annual subscription being £4000. They have assisted the following technical schools :—Huddersfield, Halifax, Keighley, Dewsbury, Salt, Bingley, Batley, Ossett, Wakefield, University College, Bristol, Trowbridge (Wilts), Westbury (Wilts), Stroud (Gloucester), Glasgow, and the numerous Polytechnics recently established in London, including the Northern Polytechnic, Islington, to the building whereof they contributed £17,500, being practically the founders thereof. Thus far-reaching and extensive is the generous aid which the Company affords for the purpose of improving the knowledge and education of the country, and of enabling our countrymen to compete with our neighbours in the markets of the world.

The Clothworkers' Company are also the governors of the Grammar School of Sutton Valence in Kent, founded by William Lambe in 1576. This school is in a flourishing condition, and its excellent work, and the high reputation which it enjoys, are alike an illustration of the fostering care bestowed by the Company upon the subjects of their trusteeship. The endowment of the school is only £30 per annum, and this the Company supplement by more than £1000 a year. The buildings of the school are all that could be desired. Upwards of £20,000 have been spent upon them since 1860, and all modern requirements have been provided for, including an excellent swimming bath, cricket ground, gymnasium, and sanatorium.

Philip Christian bequeathed £20 a year for a school at Peel, Isle of Man, upon which the Company recently expended out of their corporate funds £10,000 in new school buildings.

Altogether the Company expend annually on technical and secondary

## THE CLOTHWORKERS' COMPANY

education the large sum of £17,000 out of their gross corporate income of £40,000, and this does not include the various large sums which from time to time they devote to the extension and enlargement of school premises and other great and special needs which occasionally arise.

With regard to Church work, we have to record that the Company are the patrons of the Church of St James the Apostle, Islington, which they built, together with a mission room in connection therewith, at a cost exceeding £16,000. This Church was erected in the place of an old chapel in Monkwell Street, in the City of London, which the altered condition of affairs and the migration of the population to the suburbs rendered useless for ecclesiastical purposes. Their annual payments towards carrying on the church and mission work of the parish, in augmentation of the Vicar's stipend of £300 a year and a house, are very liberal.

In addition to their expenditure in connection with the church at Islington, the Company have subscribed generously to the several diocesan funds, viz., those of the Bishops of London, Bedford, St Albans, and Rochester. Apart from these diocesan funds, grants are not, however, made to individual churches, chapels, or missions, except in parishes connected with the Company by the ties of property.

The old almshouses of the Company were situated in Whitefriars, on part of a garden belonging to Margaret, Countess of Kent, who held the ground under a demise from the Prior of the Friary. The Countess, a free sister of the Company, bequeathed some property to them for the support of her almshouses. In 1640 one John Heath founded a set of almshouses at Islington for decayed members of the Company. However, in 1871 new almshouses were erected in Essex Road, Islington. The site was purchased for £3000 by the Company, and presented to the Almshouse Trust, and the new buildings were erected out of the corporate, as distinguished from the trust, funds, at a cost of £5309.

The Company have become the benefactors of one very important and very afflicted class of persons, who seem to have especially excited their

## THE CITY COMPANIES

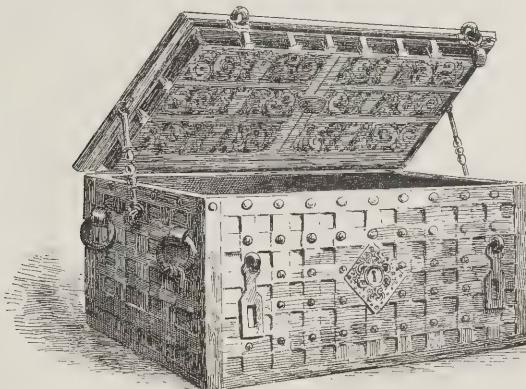
sympathy, and upon whom they have bestowed their alms with great generosity. They have nearly 1000 blind pensioners, who receive from £5 to £20 each. They also subscribe to all the leading blind institutions in the kingdom, and recently voted £1000 to the building fund of the Worcester College for the Blind. As late as 1889 a member of the Court, Mr Thomas William Wing, bequeathed £70,000 to the Company in trust for the benefit of the blind, thus testifying to his great confidence in the Company as public trustees, and to his recognition of this important and beneficent feature of their work. Many whose sad fate it is to pass through the world with darkened sight, unconscious of its beauties and incapacitated from taking an active share in its work and warfare, will bless the Clothworkers' Company for all that they have done to render their lives more comfortable and more useful, and to enable them to do something for themselves and others.

It should be added that all the Company's trust funds are administered without expense of any kind to the trusts. The cost of this administration of large and important trusts, the management of the property connected with them, the collection and expenditure of large sums of money, must be no inconsiderable item ; but the Company defray all this out of their corporate income, and leave their trust funds entirely free for the benefit of the charity consigned by pious benefactors to their care.

During the past thirty-five years the Company have shown enlightened and practical sympathy with all the great educational and philanthropic problems of the day. As an example of the public confidence which they enjoy, we may add that the Mary Datchelor Schools at Camberwell have been transferred to the fostering care of the Company, who agreed to accept the trusteeship without cost of any kind to the trust, and to supplement the school endowment by at least £700 per annum out of their own funds, which has been largely exceeded apart from capital expenditure on new buildings and equipment. This instance shows how ready they are to ally themselves with all new schemes which have for

## THE CLOTHWORKERS' COMPANY

their object the benefit of mankind and the furtherance of real and true progress. For more than four hundred years they have carried on their noble work ; in every age they have done their utmost to promote the interests of the trade with which they are associated ; they have protected the clothworker, and they have not forgotten the clothwearer ; and, while they have preserved their ancient inheritance and time-honoured institutions, they have not omitted to show themselves alive to the spirit of the age, and ready to adapt themselves to new schemes and new requirements. Bound by no iron fetters of custom and obsolete enactment, they have shown themselves to be free to reform themselves by a gradual process, and capable of active movement with the times in which they live, ever preparing new paths for continued progress, ever devising new schemes for the profit and benefit of mankind. This is the only kind of reform which all great institutions need.



IRON CHEST IN THE VESTIBULE



PART II  
THE MINOR COMPANIES



## THE MINOR COMPANIES

SEVERAL of the Minor Companies are less only in name than their greater brethren. In point of numbers and wealth some are equal to the less opulent of the Great Companies. The Armourers, Carpenters, Leather-sellers and Saddlers are especially wealthy corporations, and a large number of the Minor Companies present features of exceptional historical interest which well repay careful study. Some have no halls and small incomes, while others rival in state their major brethren, and possess fine halls which are scarcely surpassed in the City of London. The advantages of these ancient guilds are much appreciated, and this is shown by the large increase in the number of freemen of the Minor Companies, and the resuscitation of several which for some years had been dormant. The Needlemakers', Basketmakers', Turners', Shipwrights', and Fanmakers' Companies have all been revived during recent years. There are no fewer than sixty-two Minor Companies, and we shall find that in accordance with the extent of their resources they are no less eager than the Great Companies to benefit humanity by their good deeds. Apart from the management of their trusts and their contributions to various charities, some of the Companies discharge special duties in connection with the trades with which they are associated. Thus the Apothecaries examine candidates for licenses to practise as Apothecaries, and recover penalty from quacks who practise without licence. The Founders stamp weights. The Gunmakers prove and mark guns, pistols and firearms. The Scriveners examine candidates for admission to the office of a notary, and the Stationers maintain a register of all publications under the authority of the Copyright Act and carry on the trade of publishers. The Minor Companies are arranged in alphabetical order, and the question of precedence, which has produced so many disputes among the Greater Companies, no longer occurs to disturb our peace.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

### I

#### THE APOTHECARIES' COMPANY

THE chronicles of this Company, or rather Society as it prefers to be called, have been ably compiled by Dr Corfe, who in his pamphlet entitled "The Apothecary (Ancient and Modern) of the Society, London, Blackfriars," sets forth the great benefit which the Society has rendered during its lengthened existence to science, the advantages it has conferred on the world at large, and the ability it still displays to carry on its functions for the good of mankind, whilst it upholds its own reputation and the honour of the medical profession.

The Charter of the Society of Apothecaries is dated December 6th, 1617, but for many years previously they were allied and combined with the Grocers. We read of Edward III. settling sixpence a day for life on Coursus de Ganzeland, Apothecarius, London, for taking care of him during his illness in Scotland. There appears to have been some dissension between the two branches of the Grocers; sometimes the Apothecaries reproached their brethren for trading in, or being possessed of, adulterated herbs or such-like Apothecaries' wares; and later we find the Court reproaching the Apothecaries and ordering them "not to use or exercise any drugs, simples, or compounds, or any kynde or sortes of poticarie wares but such as shall be pure and perfyt good."

At any rate, during the latter part of the sixteenth century, on account of the adulteration of the drugs supplied to the public, there was general complaint, and an urgent demand was made that the people should be able to procure sound medicines and not fall a prey to ignorant quacks. The attention of King James I. was called to the subject by the Apothecary of the Royal Household, Mr Lownes, who accused one Michael Easen, also a member of the Company, of having sold him "divers sortes of defective apothecarie wares which on trial were found to be defective, corrupt, and unwholesome for man's body," for which offence the culprit was com-

## THE APOTHECARIES' COMPANY

mitted to the Poultry Compter by the Court of the Grocers. But King James was not satisfied by this exemplary punishment, and in order to prevent the recurrence of such scandals granted the Charter of the new Society on the ground "that the ignorance and rashness of presumptuous empirics and ignorant and unexpert men may be restrained, whereupon many discommodities, inconveniences, and perils do daily arise to the rude and credulous people."

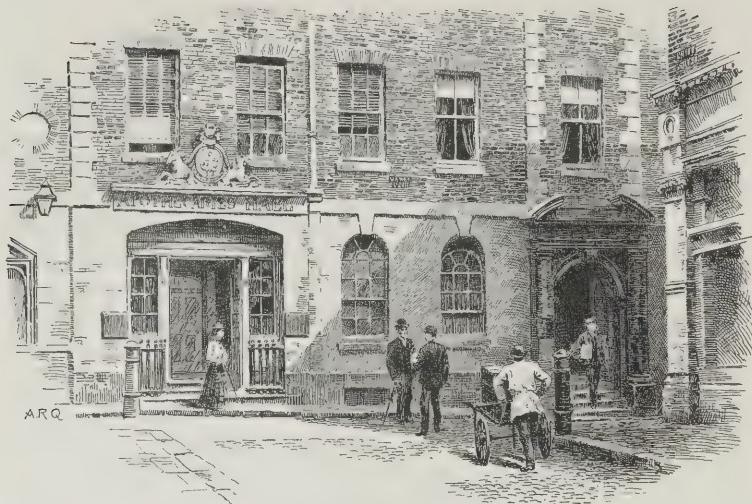
Complaints of the Grocers were then made against the Apothecaries for separating from them without the Grocers' consent, and appropriating to themselves the whole buying and selling of all drugs, and the whole distillation and selling of all waters within the City of London, to the impoverishment of many persons and their families. But King James replied :—"Another grievance of mine is that you have condemned the patents of the Apothecaries in London. I myself did devise that Corporation, and do allow it. The Grocers who complain are but merchants. The mystery of these Apothecaries were belonging to the Apothecaries, wherein the Grocers are unskilful, and therefore I think it fitting they should be a corporation of themselves."

Since the granting of the Charter in 1617 the career of the Society has been one of usefulness and continued progress, and it has carried on the objects for which it was founded to the present day. One of the objects of the Charter was to allow no one to exercise the art, faculty, or mystery of an apothecary within the city unless apprenticed to an apothecary for seven years at least. Each apprentice had to undergo an examination before the Master and Wardens in the rudiments of the Latin language and to be approved by them before he could keep an apothecary's shop, or prepare, dispense, commix, or compound medicines.

The historian of the Company speaks with pride of the courageous and unselfish conduct of the members during the last great plague, when many of the physicians died or fled, and left the poor folk to the zealous care of the Apothecaries.

*Hall.*—Gideon de Laune, the son of a Huguenot refugee, and

## THE CITY COMPANIES



APOTHECARIES' HALL

apothecary to Anne of Denmark, the queen of James I., was a great benefactor of the Society, and founded the hall in Blackfriars, on the site of which the present hall now stands. Many interesting historical associations cluster around this spot, which invite us long to linger here. After the destruction of the old hall by the Great Fire a new one was raised only ten years later through the liberality of the Society, and was much enlarged and improved in 1786. In the midst of its busy modern surroundings it is refreshing to come across this interesting edifice with its old-world appearance and associations, its numerous paintings and effigies of departed worthies, amongst whom are some very distinguished names.

The College of Physicians often waged war against the Apothecaries, and disputed their right to be recognised as medical practitioners, until

## THE APOTHECARIES' COMPANY

at length a case was tried before the House of Lords and decided in favour of the latter.

The Apothecaries' Act of 1815 greatly extended the sphere of the Society's usefulness, giving to it in lieu of the examining powers which the Society already possessed under its Charter considerably enlarged powers, which enabled it to examine in and grant licences to practise medicine throughout England and Wales. It constituted the Society of Apothecaries one of the three great licensing bodies for England and Wales, and in this Act originated the large and valuable class of medical men, who, obtaining in addition to the licence of the Society the membership of the College of Surgeons, became known to the public as general practitioners. The public spirit of the Society in obtaining this Act, and the good thereby conferred on the community, have always been recognised and gratefully acknowledged ; and, not content with their former successes, in 1874 they obtained an amendment of their Act of 1815, whereby the efficiency of the existing examinations was largely increased. Under the provisions of the Medical Act of 1886 they are now enabled to grant a statutory and registrable diploma in medicine, surgery, and midwifery after an examination, which entitles the holder to compete for appointments in all the Public Services.

Another benefit the Society confers upon the public, which ought to be noted. It is not sufficient that those who dispense medicines should be skilled and duly qualified ; attention should also be given to the quality of the drugs they use. This the Society has done. They have secured to the public the use of pure and unadulterated drugs by trading in the same, and have fixed the standard of purity in such articles. "Apothecaries' Hall" is always referred to by the medical profession as a place where such standard is strictly maintained.

*Income.*—The Income of the Society is not large, and it possesses no property beside the hall, with its library, examination rooms, laboratories and warehouses, occupying more than three-quarters of an acre in Blackfriars. The Society formerly held, under a grant by Sir Hans

## THE CITY COMPANIES

Sloane, Bart., dated February 20th, 1722, a Botanic and Physic Garden at Chelsea, originally established by the Society for the purpose of growing medical plants and the promotion of the knowledge of medical botany. The upkeep of this garden involved the Society in a considerable annual sum, and owing to the deterioration of the plants caused by the great increase of building at Chelsea, and to changes made in the medical curriculum, whereby a knowledge of medical botany was no longer of practical importance, the garden ceased to be of value or interest to the Society. Accordingly, no opposition was offered to a scheme of the Charity Commissioners in 1899, whereby the future management of the garden was entrusted to a committee consisting of various scientific and public bodies, including the Society.

The Society maintains two charitable funds, one for the support of members who have unfortunately fallen into necessitous circumstances, and the other for the support of widows of members who have been left in poverty and distress.

As regards education, in addition to the work of examination for the national diploma granted by the Society which is in constant progress throughout the year, the Society grants an annual scholarship of the value of £90, called, from the name of its founder, the Gibson Scholarship, for research in Pathology. Prizes are also offered yearly for proficiency in the art of prescribing, and an admirable course of instruction in the use of the Röntgen ray apparatus is afforded to medical practitioners on the premises.

### II

#### THE ARMOURERS' AND BRAZIERS' COMPANY

THE title of this Company carries us back to a period long before the days of red-coated soldiers, and of that "thin red line" of heroes which

## THE ARMOURERS' COMPANY

has done such execution on the battle-fields of Europe. It tells of the days when—

“Gallant knights to the tourney ride,  
All clad in coats of mail,  
And the smiles of love and a bonny bride  
The stalwart hero hail.”

It speaks to us of the heavily-laden warriors and steeds covered with armour who fought so gallantly in mediæval times, and won their spurs in many a courtly tournament :—

“The knights are dust ;  
Their good swords rust ;  
Their souls are with the saints, we trust.”

The whole history of arms and armour is one of the most important and suggestive chapters in the records of civilisation and progress. To trace the story of the evolution of modern weapons from the time when our prehistoric forefathers manufactured their flint arrow-heads and bronze swords, to watch the various changes of fashion from the Norman ring-mailed hauberk and conical cap to the heavy plate armour of the fifteenth century, until at length, as a Huguenot knight complained, “one is laden with anvils rather than protected with armour,” is a delightful study for the studious antiquary. But we are concerned rather with the making of armour than with the results of the workman’s skill. Dr Meyrick asserts that Henry VIII. was the first to cause armour to be made in England, and that he invited several German princes to send skilful armourers to teach the art to his subjects. One Robert Derick, a Dutchman, forged armour for the King at Greenwich, and his son petitioned Edward VI. that he might set up a shop and teach Englishmen to make armour. Foreigners were certainly skilful enough in the art, especially the Milanese armourers, who, according to Froissart, made a suit for Henry IV. of England, and the swords of Toulouse, Bordeaux and Toledo were famous ; but there is

## THE CITY COMPANIES

abundant evidence that Englishmen made arms long before the reign of Henry VIII., and also knew how to use them ; and the existence of this Company at an early period is evidence of this. The most splendid specimen of their art is the rich suit made for Henry, Prince of Wales, in 1612, and preserved at Windsor, by Pickering, Past Master of the Company.

The Charter of the Armourers' Company was granted to them in 1453 by Henry VI., but long before this period it can be proved that they were in existence. In this Charter, by which they were incorporated as "The Fraternity or Guild of St George of the Men of the Mistery of Armorers of the City of London," it is expressly stated that, as a guild, they had been in existence for some considerable period, and had founded and maintained a chapel in the Cathedral Church of St Paul, dedicated to St George the Martyr. From documents in the possession of the Company it appears that, as early as the year 1428, they possessed a hall ; and when, in 1578, an inquiry was made with reference to a dispute between the Company of Armourers and the Company of Blacksmiths as to the right of search for armour, guns, weapons, and edge-tools, the judges stated that "The Armourers did show unto us that in King Edward the Second his time the Lord Maior and his brethren did then graunt the serche unto the Armourers." Hence it is clear that the Company can claim an antiquity at least as ancient as the beginning of the fourteenth century.

The earliest ordinances, in the year 1322, ordained in the Husting Court, relate to this Company. To prevent worthless and unserviceable armour being covered, these ordinances provided that no smith who made the iron or steel parts should henceforth himself cover any basnet for sale, but should sell them out of his hand quite new and uncovered. (*Articles of the Armourers.*) It was the special province of the Linen-armourers or Taylors to cover the armour.

At the Reformation the Company was forced to compound for some of their property said to be held for superstitious uses, and in order to pay

## THE ARMOURERS' COMPANY

the heavy sums required by the King, they sold their Farringdon Street estate to John Richmond for £120, who, happily for the Company, just before his death devised it back to them. In the time of Elizabeth they sought to bring a Bill into Parliament for the supervision and repair of armour, the ordering of a fair and seemly marching of the City Watch in bright armour, and the compelling of every man to have a good corselet, pike, caliver with flask and touch-box, or other weapon ; but “the coming of that Frenchman,” the Duke of Anjou, to woo the Queen, prevented the business from being carried through. They contributed largely with the other Companies toward the “defence of the Queendom” at the time of the Armada, when 8000 men besides money for arms and ships were provided by the guilds.

In the days when armour was universally used by knights and warriors, the Company enjoyed a position of much importance, and received numerous Charters from successive monarchs. James I. received a consideration of £100 from the Company for granting letters patent confirming the title of the Fraternity or Guild of St George of the Men of the Mystery of Armourers to the messuages and lands then held by them. The greater part of this property is still in the possession of the Company. In the year 1685 James II. ordered that all edge-tools and armour, and all copper and brass work wrought with the hammer within the City of London, should be searched and approved by expert artificers of the Company.

The monopoly of all copper and brass work was claimed by the Braziers, whose trade was thus trenched upon by the Armourers. Hence, in the reign of Queen Anne, a wise arrangement was made, and by letters patent from the Queen the two Guilds were incorporated under the title of the Armourers and Braziers in the City of London. This Charter is still in force, but the actual connection of the Company with the trade and its ancient privileges and monopolies have practically ceased to exist.

*Hall.*—The Company possesses a very interesting hall (81 Coleman Street, London Wall), which forms a curious and important

## THE CITY COMPANIES

feature of Old London. It can be traced to the earlier half of the fifteenth century. Many past masters and other members of the Company have enriched it with gifts of plate, pictures, and armour, which are valued at £12,000. Until recently they possessed twenty-four almshouses situated in Britannia Place, Bishopsgate, for poor men and women, to each of which the Company paid £41 per annum ; but these houses have now been pulled down, and will be rebuilt in a less populous neighbourhood. The Records of the Company are a mine of curious lore for the antiquary. With regard to the history of their early home, we find that as early as the time of Henry VI. gifts were made of glass windows, cooking vessels and sundry furniture. The old building consisted mainly of a large banqueting hall with a minstrels' gallery, and additions were made at various times. During the Civil War Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston, one of the Parliamentary leaders, lodged there. The Great Fire spared it, though their property in Farringdon Street and Lower Thomas Street was entirely destroyed. The hall was repaired in 1795, and entirely rebuilt in 1841, and in 1872 the greater part of the interior was altered and decorated. Its treasures are extremely valuable. Besides some weapons and armour, there is a maser bowl (1460), the old common seal, a large number of sixteenth and seventeenth century cups, Dancette pot (1574), the gift of Thomas Tindall, rose-water salvers, and portraits of George I. by Vanderbank, George II. and his Queen by Shackleton, and many others.

*Income and Charities.*—This Company possesses one of the smallest charitable estate trusts, which amounts to less than £60 per annum. Their Corporate Income in the Report of the Royal Commission is stated to be £7940. Out of this sum more than £3000 is bestowed yearly in charities, pensions, and subscriptions to benevolent objects. In regard to technical education, the Company wisely determined to support, to the utmost of their means, the City and Guilds of London Institute, to which they give yearly 500 guineas, besides certain donations for the preliminary expenses. Amongst their donations in

## THE ARMOURERS' COMPANY

support of Church work, we find one of fifty guineas to St Paul's Cathedral Completion Fund.

The Company have, on two or three occasions, offered prizes for the best specimens of the brazier's art, and several good pieces of work are exhibited in the hall ; but the competition for these prizes was not sufficient to encourage the Company in their praiseworthy endeavours to promote the improvement of their art.

On examining the Company's statement of their charitable bequests, we find that they are in the habit of bestowing upon their trusts far more than they are obliged by the terms of their trusts, and their corporate income is largely drawn upon to assist the impoverished members of their community. The Armourers have an honourable and interesting history. They have little to do now with the trade from which they derive their name, but perhaps some learned member of the fraternity may succeed in discovering some corporal defence which can resist the attack of bullets, and bring honour upon himself and his Company. Unless he is quite sure of the success of his experiments, it is to be hoped that no future Duke of Wellington may say to him, as the old Duke said to a luckless inventor of patent bullet-proof armour, "Put it on !" and then, turning to his adjutant, " Tell the guard to turn out, and load with ball." That unhappy inventor left the presence of the Duke somewhat hurriedly.

The original arms of the Company appear on the seal, which belongs to the time of Henry VI., and represents St George, the patron saint of the Armourers slaying the dragon, with helmets on either side. A new grant of arms was made in 1556, by the Clarencieux herald, which is thus described :—"Silver on a chevron sable, a gauntlet between four swords in saltire ; on a chef sable between two helmets a plain cross gules. Upon the helm a demy man-of-arms, armed silver, holding in his hand a mace." In 1708 when the Braziers were united with the Armourers, the arms of the former were invented and incorporated with those of the latter. The Braziers were incorporated by letters patent of 19 Edward IV., but were never a Livery Company.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

The Company has weathered many a storm and passed through many difficulties. Owing to the decline of their art and the disuse of armour their craftsmen were reduced to great poverty. But they have gallantly struggled through all their adversities, and are to be congratulated on having preserved their corporation, their home, and a large portion of their treasures intact through many centuries, and on possessing such valuable records of the old civic life of London.

### III

#### THE BAKERS' COMPANY

THE makers and purveyors of the "staff of life" formed a very important community in Old London, and many were the restrictions and regulations to which they were subjected. The following is a curious extract from the *Liber Albus*, the White-Book of the City of London, compiled when the famous Dick Whittington was Lord Mayor :—

##### "Of Bakers.

"And that two loaves shall be made for one penny, and four loaves for one penny; and that no loaf shall be baked of bran. And that no baker shall sell bread before his oven, but only in the market of his Lordship the King. And if anyone is found selling in his house, he shall be amerced in the sum of 40s. And that no one shall buy such bread, under pain of losing the loaf. And that each baker shall have his own seal, as well for brown bread as for white bread, that so it may be better known whose bread it is. And that each Alderman shall view the seals of the bakers in his Ward. And that no baker of white bread shall make tourte [=brown] bread, and no one who makes tourte make white bread. And that no baker shall buy corn to sell again. And that no baker who makes tourte bread shall sell his flour to cooks for pastry," etc., etc.

The penalties for making defective bread were somewhat severe. "For

## THE BAKERS' COMPANY

the first offence let him be drawn upon a hurdle from the Guildhall to his own house, through the great streets where there may be most people assembled, and through the great streets that are most dirty, with the faulty loaf hanging from his neck. For a second offence let him be drawn from the Guildhall, through the great street of the Chepe [Cheapside], in manner aforesaid, to the pillory, and let him be put upon the pillory and remain there at least one hour in the day. And if a third default be found, he shall be drawn, and the oven shall be pulled down, and the baker made to forswear the trade within the City for ever." Fraudulent bakers were not encouraged in the "good old times."

Bread Street still retains the memory of the old market of the bakers, termed in the above extract the "Market of his Lordship the King." There alone were they allowed to sell their goods. It will be observed that a distinction is made between the bakers of white and brown (or tourte) bread, and consequently we find that there were two separate associations of White and Brown Bakers, who had different arms and constitutions, and were not united until Henry VIII. granted them a Charter in 1509. Even then, through trade jealousies or civic restrictions, the union was not complete. The White Bakers had their separate hall in Harp Lane, where Bakers' Hall now stands, while their Brown brethren had a rendezvous in the basement of Founders' Hall, Lothbury, which for many years continued to be called Brown Bakers' Hall. In 1622 the Brown Bakers had a separate Charter, but a few years later the union between the two branches of the trade was complete.

Maitland mentions the existence of the Guild of the Bakers in 1155, but they do not seem to have been incorporated until 1307, when he says letters patent were granted for that purpose by Edward II. However, the early history of the Guild is very obscure, and it is not until the reign of Henry VIII. that we find any full description of the object and aims of the fraternity, although we may be sure that it resembled the other guilds in most of its leading features.

The words of the Charter are as follows :—"To make, create, build,

## THE CITY COMPANIES

and establish a certain perpetual fraternity or guild of one master and four keepers of the commonalty of freemen of the mystery of Bakers of the City of London and suburbs thereof then dwelling, or thereafter to dwell, and of the brothers and sisters freemen of the said mystery and others who would choose to be of the same fraternity within the city aforesaid, and that the same master, four keepers, and commonalty should for ever continue to be one corporate body, with power to elect annually from among themselves one master and four keepers for the superintending, ruling, and governing of the said mystery and commonalty."

Thus were the Bakers started on their career as a City Company, and their powers were increased by successive sovereigns. The Charter of Elizabeth mentions the hall in the parish of St Dunstan, which they continue to hold, and gives them the complete scrutiny and supervision of the trade. In that of James II. it is enjoined that the assistants and clerk be members of the Church of England, and take the Communion. The right of searching for defective bread, and of generally superintending the trade, continued in force until the year 1822, when an Act of Parliament was passed (3 George IV., cap. 16) which repealed the former Acts, and placed the regulation of bakers and bakeries in other hands.

The Trust Income of the Bakers' Company is small, and only amounts to £100; their net Corporate Income is about £700, out of which the Company contribute about £250 in aid of the charity fund.

All the charities which have been entrusted to the Company at various times have been united for the purpose of maintaining their almshouses, where there are twelve inmates, who receive £20 per annum, and sundry gifts of coal and bread. These almshouses were built at a cost of £2600, to which the members of the Company generously subscribed. The Company support technical education by presenting prizes at the Confectioners and Bakers' Annual Exhibition; they also present the honorary freedom of the Company to the winners of the first prizes (honours) in the Confectionery and Bakery Examinations at the Borough Polytechnic.

## THE BARBERS' COMPANY

### IV

#### THE BARBERS' COMPANY

THE Barbers' Company possesses many points of peculiar interest, chiefly arising from their connection and identity with the Surgeons. The coupling together of the members of an honourable profession with the followers of a humble trade seems strange to our ears; but the barber-surgeon was a reality until the eighteenth century, and the barber's pole still bears witness to the fact that his art did not consist entirely in shaving and cutting hair. A querist in the *British Apollo* (1708) thus sought a reason for the existence of the barber's pole:—

“ I'de know why he that selleth ale  
Hangs out a chequer'd part per pale;  
And why a barber at port-hole  
Puts forth a party-coloured pole ? ”

The following is the answer:—

“ In ancient Rome, where men loved fighting,  
Ana wounds and scars took much delight in,  
Man-menders then had noble pay,  
Which we call surgeons of to-day—  
'Twas ordered that a huge, long pole,  
With basin decked, should grace the hole,  
To guide the wounded, who, unlopt,  
Could walk, on stumps the others hopt.  
But when they ended all their wars,  
And men grew out of love with scars,  
Their trade decaying, to keep swimming,  
They joined the other trade of trimming;  
And to their poles, to publish either,  
They twisted both their trades together.”

We are not aware whether this origin of the connection is correct. It is certainly open to doubt. At any rate, the barber-surgeon was ordered

## THE CITY COMPANIES

to use the sign of a pole outside his door. A pole was for the patient to grasp when, according to ancient practice, he was periodically bled, the bandaging being used for tying his arm. When the pole was not in use, the tape was tied to it and twisted round it ; and thus both were hung up as a sign. At length, instead of hanging up the actual pole used in the operation, a pole was painted with stripes round it, in imitation of the real pole and its bandages. Hence the barber's pole.

The Company was incorporated by Edward IV. in 1461, but the Guild of Barbers existed long before that period. A century before, on account of the great demand for their services in cases of accident, they were excused from serving on juries. In 1376 they grappled with the question of unqualified practitioners by passing bye-laws prohibiting any one to set up a shop who was not approved by two masters and sworn before the Mayor. Fortunately, the Company possesses a very ancient document, dated 1388, which shows the constitution of the Guild at that early period, and is of great historical importance. This strange mixture of shaving and surgery was not without inconvenience to the good citizens of London, and in 1415 an attempt was made to prevent ignorant barbers from injuring His Majesty's subjects. Then came the incorporation of the Company, the preamble of whose Charter, granted by Edward IV. in 1461, is especially interesting. It recites that the Freemen of the Mystery of Barbers of the City of London, using the mystery or faculty of Surgery, had for a long time exercised and sustained, and still continued to exercise and sustain, great application and labour, as well about the curing and healing wounds, blows, and other infirmities, as in the letting of blood and drawing of teeth ; and that, by the ignorance and unskilfulness of some of the said barbers, as well freemen of the said city as of others, being foreign surgeons, many misfortunes had happened to divers people by the unskilfulness of such barbers and surgeons in healing and curing wounds, blows, hurts, and other infirmities ; and that it was to be feared that the like or worse evils might thereafter ensue unless a suitable remedy was speedily provided in the premises. And it was therefore



This picture is popularly known as "Granting of the Charter to the Barber Surgeons," 1512, but more probably it represents the union of the Barbers' Company with the Guild of Surgeons, 1540



## THE BARBERS' COMPANY

granted to the freemen of the said mystery that all the men of the mystery should be one body and one perpetual community, with power of electing two Masters and making statutes for the governing of the said mysteries.

These Masters were to have power of search and correction of all freemen being surgeons, using the mystery of barbers in the city, and other surgeons, being foreigners, practising the mystery of surgery ; and were to examine all manner of instruments, plaisters, and other medicines, and the receipts used for curing and healing sores, wounds, hurts, and suchlike infirmities. No one was allowed to practise unless approved by the Masters. The members of the Company were exempted from service at assizes, juries, etc. The above is the substance of the Charter, expressed as briefly as possible, omitting many repetitions and phrases which delight the legal mind.

From the above it will be seen that, in addition to the barbers who practised surgery, there were the more skilled surgeons, several of them foreigners, who confined themselves to surgery. The surgeons of London formed a distinct, but unincorporated, company until the reign of Henry VIII., when an Act of Parliament was passed which united them and "made one entire and whole body corporate," to be called "the Masters or Governors of the Mystery or Commonalty of Barbers and Surgeons of London." They were exempt from bearing armour, and this provision was added, that "no person within the city, using any barbery or shaving, should occupy any surgery, letting of blood, or any other thing belonging to surgery, except drawing of teeth ; and that whomsoever should use the mystery or craft of surgery should not occupy the feat or craft of barbery or shaving." It must have been somewhat difficult for a barber to know what he was to do, when the Act told him that he might not bleed people, except in the way of charging heavily, and the Charter gave him full power to do so ! Probably he solved the difficulty by doing as he pleased.

However, the Charters of James I. and Charles I. renewed the privileges of the Company, and gave them power to examine and approve

## THE CITY COMPANIES

candidates, and to appoint lectures for instruction in the principles and rudiments in the art of chirurgery.

At length the medical profession advanced in dignity and importance, and its members desired to sever themselves from their old allies, the barbers. This was accomplished by the Act of 18 George II., chap. 15. The barbers retained possession of all the estates and property of the Company, after paying a sum of £510 to the surgeons and an annuity of £16.

The subsequent history of the Company possesses no features of importance. They have parted with their old hall, but they have retained the court-room and a few other chambers. They possess a great treasure in the famous painting by Holbein of Henry VIII. granting a charter to the Company. This interesting work exhibits the dress of the period and the livery of the members of the Company. Another interesting portrait is that of Inigo Jones. They also possess some beautiful plate, amongst which is a handsome loving cup, presented by Charles II.

The income of Barbers' Company is £1600, of which £600 is confined to special trusts. All the bequests entrusted to the care of the Company are for the benefit of their poor members. By the liberality of Mr John Atkinson they will soon be enabled to build a set of almshouses, and to found an institution, to be called the Barbers' Asylum, for the lodging, maintenance, and education of poor members of the Company. He also left £100 to be invested for the purpose of buying Bibles for the poor members of the Company.

The Barbers' Company have enjoyed a long and distinguished career. Their history has been written by Mr Sydney Young, whose book is an interesting and valuable memorial of the part which the Company have played in the past in the important sphere of the development of medical skill and knowledge.



ROYAL OAK CUP, 1676  
At the Barber-Surgeons' Hall



HENRY VIII. CUP, 1523  
At the Barber-Surgeons' Hall



## THE BASKET-MAKERS' COMPANY

### V

#### THE BASKET-MAKERS' COMPANY

THIS is a very small Company. So far as we can ascertain it never possessed any houses, lands, or other property. For many years the number of members was very small, and it was in danger of passing away into oblivion ; but owing to the exertions of the present clerk and a few other supporters of the Company it has been revived, and, as regards the number and standing of its members, is in a prosperous condition.

The books of the Company have been searched in vain to find a Charter. An entry in the minute-book, dated 1666, states that all the books, papers, and documents belonging to the Company were kept in one of the rooms at the Guildhall, and were totally destroyed in “the great and dreadful fire,” together with carpets, silver spoons, and other property. If the Company ever possessed a Charter, it must have met with the same fate.

The origin and early history of the Company is lost in obscurity. It probably never occupied a very important position among its powerful brethren ; but it is stated in the proceedings of the Court of Aldermen, on the granting of the livery, that the Company have existed from time immemorial, and are a Company by prescription, and have been frequently recognised as such, and have from time to time contributed, borne, and paid their full and due proportion and share of the contributions and duties as paid by the other Companies of the City of London. Mention is made of the Company in the time of Edward IV., and it appears that they were obliged to carry on their trade in the Manor of Blanche Appleton, Fenchurch Street. The Company was established by an Order of the Court of Mayor and Aldermen on September 22, 1566, and January 10, 1585, and the following rules, orders, and regulations for their government were drawn up about the same time :—

“First. That men enfranchised in the said craft and occupation of

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Basket-makers of the City of London for the time being may lawfully hereafter, once in every two years, between the feasts of St James and St Bartholomew the Apostle, assemble themselves together in a place necessary to them, and convenient within the said city, and there to choose and elect for themselves two able men, free of the said craft, for the space of two whole years then next following, and the same two wardens so chosen, within eight days next following the said election, shall be sworn in the court to be holden in the upper chamber of the Guildhall, before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the said city for the time being, truly to do and execute such things as shall appertain and belong unto their office, according to the good rules and ordinances to be to them allowed and approved by the same court, like as the usage and custom is within the said city, and as the wardens of other companies do, upon pain of five pounds, the one half there to be applied to the use of the chamber of the said city, and the other half to the common box of the poor within the house of Christ Church, and that if the same wardens, being thus elected and sworn, or either of them, happen to die within the same two years that they should stand wardens, that then the good men enfranchised in the said craft may choose one or two others of the said craft to supply and serve in the stead and place of him or them so deceased for the residue of the said two years.

“ Item. That within one month next after the choosing of the new wardens at the end of every two years in form aforesaid, the old wardens which occupied and stood in the office the two years then next preceding shall make and yield up their accompts unto the wardens chosen, and to five or four other persons of the said craft such as the said new wardens shall appoint, and shall truly answer, pay, and deliver unto the said new wardens to the use of the same company all that which shall be found to remain in their hands by that accompt upon pain of five pounds, the one half thereof to be paid to the chamber of the said city, and the other half to the common box of the said craft ; and if the said accompt be behind and not given up and payment not made as is aforesaid longer than one

## THE BLACKSMITH'S COMPANY

month, then the old wardens so failing of giving up of their accompt and making of payment accordingly, without they have a reasonable excuse shall pay for every month so long as their said accompt is not given up after the said new wardens and after the end of the said first month forty shillings, to be divided in form aforesaid."

Further Orders were made on March 27, 1610. By Order of the Court of Aldermen, dated December 1901, the number of the Livery was increased from thirty to eighty.

The income of the Company depends entirely upon the subscriptions of the members. A few years ago it amounted to only £60, but owing to the increased interest which its members now take in its welfare, it has attracted many new members, and the income of the Company has considerably increased.

This is greatly to the credit of the few energetic members that have rescued and restored to active life this ancient corporation. It is a sad pity when old associations are allowed to die and disappear, and a Livery Company which once took an active share in old city life, which shared with the Fishmongers in establishing the Ulster plantation, and ranked with the other Livery Companies more than three hundred years ago, is worthy of a better fate. We hope that the Company may increase and prosper; and that some future historian of the Company may be able to describe the hall of the Basket-makers, which at present does not exist, and record the active and benevolent work which the Company has been able to accomplish by the munificence and industry of its members.

### VI

#### THE BLACKSMITHS' COMPANY

THIS Company is an ancient corporation which was established more than five hundred years ago for the promotion of good fellowship and

## THE CITY COMPANIES

the protection and encouragement of the trade the name of which it bears.

The smith of ancient days was a very important person. We usually associate him now with the shoeing of horses, but in olden times he had to perform a vast number of arts, and was even required to draw teeth. The motto on the arms of the Blacksmiths is—

“By hammer and hand  
All arts do stand,”

and indeed the hammer of the blacksmith of ancient times was put to a variety of uses which would certainly puzzle the minds of our modern smiths. Besides sword-blades and spear-heads, and other weapons of defence, the blacksmiths used to fashion all descriptions of ironwork. Who has not heard of the famous blacksmith of Antwerp, Quintin Matsys, and seen the results of his marvellous skill in the ironwork which adorns the well opposite the Cathedral? This canopy of iron, surmounted by a statue of Salvius Brabo, a mythical hero, is a wonderful example of the skill of the smiths of former days. This noted smith became afterwards a great painter. In order to win the daughter of an artist, it is said that he exchanged the anvil for the palette; but, whether the story be true or not, the fact that the blacksmith could turn his hand to painting seems to prove the great skill and artistic knowledge of the early workers in iron.

The smiths, too, were the great dentists of their age, in spite of the barbers; and when clocks were invented and introduced into England from the Continent, before the Clockmakers' Guild was established, the blacksmiths acquired the knowledge of the new mystery, and enjoyed a monopoly of the trade.

The Guild of the Blacksmiths claims to have been incorporated by prescription in the reign of Edward III. in 1325. A few years later, the bye-laws of the Company were drawn up, and we find that the Blacksmiths carried on their trade in three districts of the metropolis—

## THE BLACKSMITH'S COMPANY

Gracechurch Street, St Nicholas' Shambles, and near the "Tun" on Cornhill. In order to prevent unskilled and defective work, every one who required the services of the smiths was ordered to take the work to one of these three localities. Each smith had his own special mark, which was stamped on all the ironwork wrought by him, for the genuineness of which he was thus made responsible.

The first Charter was granted to the Company by Queen Elizabeth in the year 1571, which united the Blacksmiths with the ancient Guild of the Spurriers, or makers of spurs. This Guild was in existence in the year 1345, and possessed some ancient regulations, which forbade them to work after the curfew bell had sounded in the Church of St Pulcher, Newgate, lest the worthy spurriers should wander about all day, and go to their work at night in a drunken condition, blowing up their forges to the peril and discomfort of their neighbours. They were not to expose their spurs for sale on Sundays, but might sell them within their shops. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Spurriers ranked as a Livery Company, and, as we have said, were united to the Blacksmiths by the Charter of Queen Elizabeth.

Both James I. and Charles I. renewed this Charter, and by the latter power was given to the Blacksmiths' Company to make reasonable laws and ordinances in writing for the good rule, governing, and correcting of the freemen of the said arts or mysteries within the City of London and four miles of the said city. Authority was also granted to them to overlook and examine the making of spurs, ironwork, or anything concerning the said arts or mysteries within the aforesaid prescribed radius.

Then began, in 1627, a notable quarrel between the Clockmakers and the Blacksmiths, which lasted for many years. The Blacksmiths, as makers of all ironwork, claimed a monopoly of clockmaking. At one time they came into collision with the Carpenters, inasmuch as wooden clock-cases were necessary. But the Clockmakers considered that they had a right to a separate organisation and a monopoly of their trade, without any interference from the makers of spurs, horse-shoes, and the

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like. The Clockmakers seem to have gained the greater victories in this struggle. They obtained their own charter, and refused to be united with the rival company. The Blacksmiths did not like to be beaten, and the law courts and the civic tribunals rang with their complaints. But their rivals held their ground, and they were obliged to turn their energies into other channels. The increased use of firearms made their forges very busy, until the Gunmakers' Company came into existence and secured the monopoly. The history of this Company exhibits very forcibly the inconvenience of the old system of trade, when particular industries were only allowed to be carried on by each set of workmen, who were prevented by stringent regulations from trespassing upon the industry of their neighbours.

The Blacksmiths' Company have only one ancient charity to administer. One Edward Prestyn, in the year 1557, bequeathed property for the purpose of giving in charity among the poor artists of the Society of Blacksmiths and Spurriers of London, according to the discretion of the wardens for the time being, four shillings of lawful money. The income arising from this property is now £136, which is spent in providing twelve pensions of £12 each to poor members of the Company. The total income of the Company is £684, and of this about £200 is devoted to charitable purposes.

The Company do not now possess a hall, but they held one in ancient times on Lambeth Hill, where they dispensed the usual civic hospitality and celebrated their festivities in becoming state and dignity. The pictures, plate, and costly furniture have vanished with their hall; but they still maintain their entertainments, and, though they are not a wealthy corporation, they endeavoured to carry out the intentions of their founders and to preserve for posterity their honourable Company.

## THE BOWYERS' COMPANY

### VII

#### THE BOWYERS' COMPANY

THE motto of this Company, "Creçy, Poictiers, Agincourt," tells of the prowess of our English archers in the use of their famous bows, which struck terror into the hearts of our foemen in ancient days. "Alas, alas, for Scotland when English arrows fly!" was the sad lament of many a Highland clan, and Frenchmen often learnt to their cost the force of our bowmen's arms. Archery was the national pastime of Englishmen, as well as their support in war. The Charter of the Company calls it "a principal munition and strength of this our kingdom in times of war and hostility." Edward III. ordered "that every one strong in body, at leisure on holidays, should use in their recreation bows and arrows, and learn and exercise the art of shooting, forsaking such vain plays as throwing stones, handball, football, bandy-ball, or cock-fighting, which have no profit in them." Edward IV. ordered every Englishman, of whatever rank, to have a bow his own height always ready for use, and to instruct his children in the art. In every township the butts were ordered to be set up, and the people were required to shoot "up and down" every Sunday and feast-day, under penalty of one halfpenny. The famous Finsbury archers had, in 1594, no less than 164 targets in Finsbury Fields, set on pillars with curious devices over them.

So important was the sport that the making of bows must have been a most important and flourishing industry. Stow describes Grub Street in Queen Elizabeth's time as having been inhabited by bowyers, fletchers and bowstring makers, who supplied the archers of Finsbury, Moorfields and Islington. But the bowyers did not have it all to themselves. There were the stringers, or long-bowstring makers, who supplied the strings for the bows, and the fletchers, who made the arrows. The latter formed a Company, which is still in existence, and to which we shall presently refer. The Stringers' Company is defunct; but so late as 1722 the Long Bow String Makers' Company made proposals to

## THE CITY COMPANIES

the Bowyers for being translated and admitted into the latter Company. The existence of three separate bodies for the manufacture of an archer's equipment is another curious example of the sub-division of labour and monopoly formerly practised in England. The Bowyers' Company's Charter contains a special prohibition that no fletcher shall make, mend, or utter, or sell by retail any bows in the City of London under pain of divers penalties.

The Guild of Bowyers is an ancient fraternity, but they did not receive a charter until their prosperity began to wane, and matchlocks and muskets took the place of the once famous longbow. A grant of arms and a crest to the "full honourable crafte and fraternyte of Bowyers" was made in 1488 ; namely, for arms, "Sable upon a chevron gold thre mallets persyd betwene thre flotys silver" ; and for crest, "Thre Bowes bent goulys strykdyd gold sette within a wreath gold and asure, the mantell sable forred with ermyne." The Company is mentioned in the year 1501 as contributing to the cost of building the kitchens and other offices adjoining the Guildhall. James I. in 1621 granted a Charter to the "Master, Wardens, and Society of the Mystery of Bowyers of the City of London." It recites that the Bowyers of the City of London using the art or mystery of making of longbows were then an ancient fraternity in the city, but had fallen into decay through want of employment occasioned by disuse of that laudable exercise of shooting, wherein in times past this nation above all others was so expert and dexterous, and that the King being willing, as much as in him did lie, to restore the ancient and laudable exercise of archery with the longbow, unto the end that the said fraternity might with better encouragement practise their trade, grants that the Bowyers of London . . . shall be a body corporate and politic by the before-mentioned name or style. The Charter proceeds to give directions with regard to the governing of the Company, and compels all Bowyers within the City to belong to it and pay their quarterage of 2s. 8d. per year.

It is unnecessary to examine the bye-laws of the Company, which

## THE BOWYERS' COMPANY

possess few features of interest. In spite of the confirmation of the Charter by Charles II., the trade naturally declined, and the Company became less prosperous.

The total income of the Company is £590, of which £40 and £550 constitute their trust and corporate funds. They are responsible for one curious and important trust, which was bequeathed to them by James Wood in the year 1625. He was a member of the Court of the Company at the time of the charter, and left, by will, to the Company of Bowyers his manor of Isley Walton, in Leicestershire, and other property, for the purpose of founding three scholarships at Oxford University for the sons of freemen of the Company, and two at Cambridge, of the value of £6 each. If there were no freemen's sons available, the scholarships were to be given to five poor scholars attending Christchurch School, in London, or to such others as the Master and Wardens should think most fit. To six poor men or widows of the Company three yards of broadcloth of 10s. the yard were to be given to make a gown, and on the following year 30s. in money, and so on from year to year for ever. Every second year the Master and Wardens and livery should repair to the parish church of St Nicholas Cole Abbey, on "oath-day," *i.e.*, the day when, as the will says, "they swear their Master and Wardens," to hear a sermon, and to give to the parson 20s. for his sermon, to the clerk and sexton 1s. 6d. apiece, to the churchwardens for the use of the poor of the parish 10s., to the beadle of the Company 2s., and unto the poor people they shall meet coming and going 15s. in twopences. After assigning certain other doles, the benefactor directed that the Company should keep the residue of the profits derived from the estate and other premises towards the purchasing of a hall, and to be otherwise employed at the discretion of the members for the use of the poor and the good of the Company.

The same kind benefactor gave to the Company £100, to be lent to four honest, sober, discreet young men of the Company, by even portions, at three per cent. for two years, and the interest to be distributed

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amongst the poorest of the freemen. The money seems to have been lent and lost.

The Company have now ten scholarships of £10 each, at Oxford and Cambridge, tenable by undergraduates during residence at the University. These are awarded to poor scholars after careful consideration of the applications.

The Bowyers have also recognised their duties as landlords, and as promoters of education, by building a school on their estate and contributing to its support. They also assist various charities, and have established prizes for promoting proficiency in rifle shooting in the Army and Militia. Thus, though weapons and targets have changed somewhat since the Company was formed, it still carries on its useful mission of teaching Englishmen to shoot straight.

The intentions of the Company's munificent benefactor, James Wood, were carried out with regard to the purchase of a hall. Some writers say that it was situated in Noble Street, but the evidence all seems to show that Bowyers' Hall was in Hart Street, by the corner of Monkswell Street. Stow states, "Bowyers' Hall was anciently in Hart Street, and before the Great Fire upon St Peter's Hill in Castle Baynard." The hall has now ceased to exist. A memorial of their benefactor, James Wood, has recently been placed in the church of St. Nicholas Cole Abbey.

## VIII

### THE BREWERS' COMPANY

THIS Company, although practically very poor, ranks high in dignity and importance. It has an income of only £2500 a year, and a trust estate of £15,000. Their trusts are so numerous and important, their documents so varied and interesting, and their history so ancient and full

## THE BREWERS' COMPANY

of curious detail, that a large volume would be required for a complete account of this flourishing Company.

The Brewers' Company was incorporated as early as 1445 by Henry VI. This Charter, after citing the Brewers' Company as one of the ancient mysteries, incorporates the Company into one body and perpetual community, with the power to elect each year from among the members of the corporation four persons to be Wardens. But there are several notices of the existence of the Guild prior to the granting of their Charter. They have in their possession a book entitled *Records and Accounts of the Brewers' Company* from 1418 to 1440. It contains some curious entries of bribes offered to the Mayor and Aldermen of the City, and willingly accepted by them, in order to obtain favourable consideration in the conduct of their business. The laws and regulations which the authorities of the city ordained for the government of the brewers were very severe and minute. The *Liber Albus* contains several entries with regard to the price of ale (the *Liber Custumarum* gives it at three farthings a gallon, *temp. Edward I.*), the measures to be used, the pains and penalties inflicted for defective measures. It appears that in the time of Edward I. the trade was chiefly in the hands of Brewsters, or female brewers, and was then reckoned amongst the callings of low repute. But by degrees the trade began to increase in importance, and in 1345 the Brewers used so much of the water of the conduit in the Cheap that they were forbidden to take their supply from that source. A few years later we find them taking their position in the Common Council of the city, but on account of their unseemly conduct at the meetings, a bye-law of the Council was passed which enacted that no Brewers should be eligible for election. One member was actually committed to gaol for disparaging words used of the Company. Evidently the Brewers of those days were of a touchy and sensitive disposition, and rather addicted to plain and forcible language.

It is not recorded in history whether the famous Dick Whittington,

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or, rather, Sir Richard Whittington, was a total abstainer; at any rate, he fell foul of the Brewers, and accused them of "forestalling." It is said that Sir Richard was angry with the Brewers for having some fat swans at their feast!

But in spite of this, within a very short time the Brewers attained a high rank among the Companies, and at the beginning of the sixteenth century were the fourteenth Company. They had a grant of arms in the reign of Edward IV., and another grant from Henry VIII. Queen Elizabeth favoured the Company by granting them two Charters, which extended their jurisdiction beyond the boundaries of the city. The large increase in the number of persons engaged in the trade of brewing rendered this action necessary, and the Charter of Charles I. still further enlarged their jurisdiction and privileges. They were forced to surrender their Charter on account of the unjust *Quo warranto* proceedings of Charles II.; but his successor renewed the Charter with increased powers, including the exaction of quarterage from all persons brewing in the city or within eight miles; the power to search brew-houses and taste the produce, imposing penalties in cases where such produce were found unwholesome; to search and inspect grain, hops, vessels, etc., on land or on the water. These rights still belong to the Company, but for some years past they have not been exercised.

As early as 1420 the Company were the possessors of a hall in Addle Street, Cheapside, where feasts were held, of which some *menus* have been preserved. The hall was, of course, destroyed by the Great Fire, and rebuilt in 1673 by subscription. A list of the subscribers' names, bearing the date 1670, is still preserved. In the midst of modern surroundings, near the noise and bustle of Cheapside, it is refreshing to enter the old gateway and examine this quaint specimen of Old London architecture. There is a quadrangle surrounding a small courtyard; a wide and ancient staircase leads to the hall itself, which is adorned with wainscot, oak carving, and the portraits of benefactors. The old kitchens, huge fireplaces, and ancient spits; the court-room,



*The Courtyard and Entrance to Hall of the Broers Singen*



## THE BREWERS' COMPANY

with its curious porthole windows, and the various pictures, all are objects of delightful interest.

We will now refer to the "good works" of the Company, which are numerous and most ably performed. Members of the Company in ancient days had such complete confidence in the integrity and administrative capacity of the Company that they entrusted to their care several large and important trusts. Foremost among them stands the name of Alderman Richard Platt, who, in 1596, bequeathed some property to the Company for "the instruction of poor men's children of the parish of Aldenham and towns near adjoining, and for the relief and maintenance of poor, aged, and impotent people." The present income derived from this property is £3753 (the original value was only £54). The founder of this charity erected a grammar school and almshouses at Aldenham, Herts. The governing body is still composed mainly of members of the Company, who hand over for the maintenance of the school the sum of £2200. They have built also lower schools at Aldenham and Medburn, and endowed them with £8000. They have six almshouses at Delrow, near Aldenham, and bestow upon the inmates in gifts, about £100 a year. They have also endowed with £20,000 and £600 a year the North London Collegiate School for Girls, and devoted £13,333 for the endowment of the Watford schools. They also give £300 a year to the Watford End schools, and £100 a year to the Alderham Elementary schools.

Another great benefactor was Dame Alice Owen, who, in 1609, left an estate, which now yields £10,652, for "the relief of ten poor old widows\* of the parishes of Islington and Clerkenwell," and for educational purposes. A school was erected at Clerkenwell and almshouses at Islington. Subsequently these were removed to Owen Street. The Company have now erected a large school for 450 boys in Owen Street, a large girls' school wherein 300 are taught, and £6000 was lent for the support of the North London Collegiate and Camden Schools for Girls.

\* The number has now been increased to fourteen poor widows.

## THE CITY COMPANIES



BREWERS' COMPANY.—ALMSHOUSES, SOUTH MIMMS

The good dame desired to express her gratitude to God, “upon the altar of her charitable almshouses and schools, for having preserved her life when, while playing in childhood, an arrow pierced her hat, but spared her head.”

Alderman Hickson, in 1686, left an estate, which now yields £459 a year, for the founding of a school and almshouses. The school was built in Plough Yard, Seething Lane, and the almshouses at Kitt's End, South Mimms. In 1857 the Company erected new almshouses at a cost of £900, and in 1852 a new school in Trinity Square, Tower Hill, at a cost of £9000. About 100 boys attended this school. The income of the charity was quite inadequate to support the school, which thus had to depend entirely upon the private funds of the Company. The school has recently been closed by order of the Charity Commissioners

## THE BREWERS' COMPANY

and the funds merged in the Hickson Starling and Death foundation for scholarships.

John Baker, in 1813, also left money to the Company to build and endow six almshouses near the London Hospital, in the Mile End Road, which were erected in 1825.

Samuel Whitbread, in 1794, bequeathed to the Company estates at Great Barford and in Whitecross Street, which yield about £1800 a year, for the benefit of poor Master Brewers, their widows, and the poor free-men of the Company and their widows.

Robert Hunt, in 1620, left money "to cause a catechising to be held by the Vicar of St Giles', Cripplegate," who still receives the amount of £10 for his services. These are the principal trusts which the Brewers so ably administer.

They also give £450 a year for scholarships at the Universities tenable by students from Aldenham School, and some thirty scholarships for pupils at the school, during their residence there.

In the support of the National Church of England the Brewers' Company do good work, and subscribe liberally to the restoration funds for churches and for the various branches of parochial work. We notice the names of several of the London churches on their list of donations, and also of numerous National schools.

In conclusion, we desire to congratulate the Brewers' Company upon the noble work that they have accomplished and continue to carry on. The Brewers of ancient days were evidently liberal-minded men, and their successors have proved themselves worthy of their trust. Their schools, their almshouses, their numerous charitable bequests, are witnesses of their good work, which has conferred such vast benefits on the community. It would not be possible for their schemes of beneficence to be better organised or more thoroughly and satisfactorily carried out.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

### IX

#### THE BRODERERS' COMPANY

ALL those who have examined the old altar-cloths, funeral palls, and rich tapestry work of the English school of embroidery, know well the skill of the ancient Broderers. They have left behind them many specimens of their skill, which is in no way lessened by the fact that they owe the rudiments of their art to Flemish influence and taste. Arras work was the model after the pattern of which much of our English embroidery was designed. Several of the Companies still possess their funeral palls—splendid specimens of the broderer's art—which were used on the occasion of the last obsequies of their brethren. In the halls of the Merchant Taylors, the Vintners, Fishmongers, and others, may still be seen these productions of the English school of embroidery, and the accounts of the Coopers' Company furnish us with the particulars of making of a new cloth, which cost £57, and includes many pounds of Venice gold and silver, and silks of divers colours, pearls, candles for night work, and many other details of expenditure. Many illustrious families, too, had their palls, and rich altar-cloths were woven for our churches and cathedrals, and splendid vestments for the clergy. The dresses, too, of the ladies, as well as the attire of the gentlemen, the hangings of their chambers, the adornments of their swords and daggers, all required the richest embroidery; hence the members of the Company were in no need of support, and their craft was honoured and held in great respect.

The Tapissters, or Tapestry-makers (*Telarii*), mentioned by Chaucer, formed a very early guild of craftsmen, who were in existence in 1331, and were subsequently absorbed in the Broderers' Company. The fraternity seems to have been most flourishing in the fourteenth century, before it attained to the dignity of a chartered company. Mention is made, in an early deed of the time of Henry VIII., of Thomas Foster,

## THE BRODERERS' COMPANY

"citizen and broyderer," who granted to the Company some property in Gutter Lane. Foster Lane, Cheapside, is named after this worthy member, in whose will "the wardens and the mystery of broyderers within the city of London" are described as a definite body.

The first Charter was granted by Queen Elizabeth in the year 1561. It incorporates the freemen of the mystery or art of Broderers of the City of London and the suburbs, by the name of keepers or wardens and society of the art and mystery of the Broderers of the City of London, to have perpetual succession and a common seal, to bring and defend actions, and, especially in the City of London, to hold lands of the annual value of £30 for the assistance and support of poor men and women of the mystery. The wardens had power to make good and salutary statutes and ordinances for the good regulation and government of the mystery, and to overlook and govern the art, and to punish all men for not truly working or selling. This Charter was confirmed by James I. in 1609. A document bearing the date 1634 shows the lamentable condition of the trade in the reign of Charles I. It is a petition to the King, praying for a licence in mortmain, and states that the trade of embroidery "is now so much decayed and grown out of use so that a great part of the Company, for want of employment, are so much impoverished as they are constrained to be porters, water-bearers, and the like." The palmy days of English Broderers had evidently passed away.

The Company possess a curious and interesting set of ancient bye-laws, dated 1562, which are thirty-five in number, and of which the following may be mentioned:—The wardens may remain in office two years, "for the better finishing and ending of such matters as they have begun in their time." Penalties are to be imposed on the wardens who are found not to have done their duty, but to have connived at any offence, "for need, favour, affection or dread." All embroidered work is to be brought to the hall and sealed before sale. No man may rebuke, revile, or curse another in the presence of the wardens. There are sundry regula-

## THE CITY COMPANIES

tions with regard to the right of search to be conducted by the wardens and by two discreet persons of the Court, in the workshops of the City of London or Westminster, the borough of Southwark, and the parish of St Katherine, to see whether the work be good or bad. The last trade search was conducted in 1710, and the results were not altogether satisfactory ; for we read that, when the wardens visited the workhouses of embroidery, they "found many foreigners, and many were refractory and used scurrilous language, and none appeared on being summoned to the hall." The experiment was not repeated, and the connection of the Company with the trade gradually ceased to exist.

Since that period the Company have endeavoured to develop their charitable work, which is enjoined upon them by their earliest Charter. They administer their charities with care and generosity, and no application for assistance and support of poor men and women of the mystery has (so far as the present members of the Court, whose recollection extends back to 1848, are aware) ever been refused or ignored.

The Company declined to furnish the Commissioners with any information with regard to their private or corporate income, although they gave full details of their trust property ; and in doing so they acted entirely within their rights. They claim the right which every individual, as well as every corporate body, according to English law, possesses for the protection and preservation of their own property, especially as their rights and privileges have existed for centuries past, and have been handed down to the present members of the Company from a long line of predecessors. They therefore respectfully declined to furnish the Commissioners with any information concerning their own private affairs. Perhaps, on the whole, it would have been to the interest of the Company to have furnished this information. Certainly, by giving an account of the way in which they have managed their affairs, the Companies have strengthened their position, and warded off the attacks of their foes. Secrecy and mystery, however warrantable, beget distrust and slander ; and although the public have no right to know how the

## THE BRODERERS' COMPANY

Companies expend their wealth, it might be to the interest of the Companies if the public were made more conversant with their good deeds.

The Trust Income of the Company does not exceed £70 per annum, which arises from several ancient bequests, so ancient that in most cases it is not known where the money is invested, nor what was the original or the present income derived from it. Amongst the benefactors are John Parr (1605), John Hudson (1612), William Broderick (1620), William Smith (1625), Jane Pope (1625), Ann Chamberlain (1626), Mary Paradine (1628), Stephen Humph (1535), John Foster (1528), and others. Most of the bequests are for the benefit of poor members of the Company, and the poor of certain parishes in London.

The Company have shown an interest in education by establishing a scholarship in 1874 of £50 per annum for a scholar of the City of London School, tenable for three years at Oxford or Cambridge.

A small hall in Gutter Lane, granted to the Company by Thomas Foster, was held by the Company until the beginning of the last century; it is still owned but not occupied by them.

The associations of the Broderers' Company are full of quaint interest. The Broderers are the possessors of two very valuable cups, one the gift of Mr John Parr, in the year 1606; he was embroiderer to Queen Elizabeth and King James I.; the other the gift, in 1628, of Mr Edmund Harrison, embroiderer to their Majesties King James I. and King Charles I. The cups are always handed round on festive occasions. The Broderers have always been loyal both to Church and State, for, in the olden times, before the Courts were held, the members attended



STANDING CUP AND  
COVER, 1611, AT  
BRODERERS' HALL

## THE CITY COMPANIES

divine service, and no one could become a member of the Court without producing a certificate that he was a communicant. It has always been, too, a commendably charitable Company, taking much thought for its poor, giving scholarships to several societies for the encouragement of art needlework, advancing education by establishing a scholarship, and persistently subscribing to London hospitals and other institutions and objects for the good of the community.

One of the relics of antiquity which give proof of the age of the Broderers' Company is a very handsome oak chair, formerly used as the seat of the Master when presiding at the Courts and banquets, and from which he delighted his guests with a humorous song peculiar to the Broderers, which is still sung with very amusing effect at every banquet. The refrain, which is singularly quaint, and at the same time contains the quintessence of commercial morality and honour, is as follows :—

“Oh, give us your plain-dealing fellows,  
Who never from honesty shrink,  
Not thinking of all they should tell us,  
But telling us all that they think.”

It is believed that this ancient chair dates back beyond the Great Fire of London. On State occasions there stand on each side of this chair the Porter's Staff and the Beadle's Staff, the heads of both of which are ancient and made of silver, that of the former being marked with the date 1628.

It is a matter for congratulation, that in its venerable old age the Broderers' Company is showing beneficent activity; in 1894 it held, at the Mansion House, its first exhibition of embroidery, which was followed by another exhibition this year, at the Royal School of Art Needlework, Exhibition Road, S.W.

## THE BUTCHERS' COMPANY

### X

#### THE BUTCHERS' COMPANY

VEGETARIANS have never been numerous in our country, hence the Butchers' trade has always occupied an important position, and in very early times they assumed the functions and constitution of a guild. As early as the year 1180 the fraternity of "Bochers" is found to exist, and first appears on the list of "adulterine guilds," which were compelled to pay a fine to the King's Exchequer for not being duly licensed. We find that they had three markets for their meat, one at "Stokkes," near the Mansion House, another in Eastcheap, and another at St Nicholas' Shambles, now called Newgate Street. Old London Bridge was lined with shops and stalls, and thither the Butchers went to sell their meat, until they were prohibited by a strict order of the Mayor in 1277.

These markets consisted of a number of stalls, with places for slaughtering attached. The killing of beasts and the disposal of the refuse of these numerous slaughter-houses did not improve the condition of public thoroughfares, and numerous were the restrictive orders imposed upon the butchers by the civic authorities. In mediæval times it was considered quite as serious an offence to bring to market diseased or putrid meat as it is now, and offenders, upon conviction, were punished with peculiar severity, as the following extract from the records of the Corporation will show :—

"1319. 13 Edward II., Nov. 1. The sworn wardens of flesh meat brought to the shambles called 'Les Stokkes,' seized two beef carcasses, putrid and poisonous, taken from William Sperlyng, of West Hamme, he intending to sell the same at the same shambles. The Mayor and Aldermen order the said Sperlyng to be put in the pillory, and the said carcasses to be burnt under him"—a most unpleasant and deterrent punishment!

In the same reign we hear of one Nicholas Schyngal, who accused another man of bringing putrid meat to market; but, when it was dis-

## THE CITY COMPANIES

covered that the accuser had himself committed the offence which he falsely charged on another, he was ordered to be put in the pillory and the meat burnt under him.

The Butchers seemed to have been often called to account for infraction of the laws and customs of the city, and obstructions in the city highways were, in early times, regarded as grave offences. Thus, in the reign of Edward III., the Mayor and Aldermen found that the King's highway between the Stokkes and the Conduit in the ward of the Chepe was so occupied on *flesh days* by Butchers and poulters, with their wares for sale, and fishmongers on *their days*, that persons could not pass through but with great hindrance. So it was ordered that the Butchers should sell their meat within the "Stokkes," and not on the King's highway, and that the fishmongers on their days should occupy the same inclosure. Thus we see that on the fast days the Butchers had to give place to the sellers of fish. The condition of the streets at this period must have been extremely filthy, and caused divers prelates, nobles, and other persons of the city having houses near the shambles of the Butchers of St Nicholas, to make grievous complaints to King Edward III. on account of the slaughtering of beasts and the carrying of entrails, offal, etc., through the streets to the river, which created so foul a nuisance that no one could venture to abide in his house. It was ordered that no beasts should be slaughtered in the streets, and that they should be taken to "Stretteford" or "Knightsbrigge" for this purpose. It is curious to note that the now fashionable quarter of Knightsbridge should then be assigned for the location of slaughter-houses.

The proclamation of prices of meat in the time of Edward III. is also curious. It orders that the best goose should be sold for 6d.; best sucking pig, 8d.; best capon, 6d.; hen, 4d.; rabbit, 4d.; woodcock, 3d.; perdriche, 5d.; fesaunt, 2d.; spaude or shoulder of roast mutton, 2½d.; carcass of mutton, 2s.; loigne of pork, 3d.; loigne of beef, 5d.; pestelle (leg) of beef, 3d.

All Butchers were obliged to close their shops before candles were

## THE BUTCHERS' COMPANY

lighted, and, by reason of the danger of fire, to sell no meat by the light of candle. These early regulations are full of interest, and much space might be devoted to an account of the various orders which were issued for the government of the trade: but we are chiefly concerned with the history and records of the Guild of Butchers, of which the present Company is the lineal descendant. Their present hall stands on the site of the early home of the Guild in "Scalding Lane." The neighbourhood of Newgate Street is historic ground. There stood the old church of St Nicholas, and near it the monastery of Greyfriars, which was built by John Ewin, a physician of London, and enlarged by Margaret, the queen of Edward I., and the citizens of London. After the dissolution of monasteries a grant of the "Mansyon House," attached to the monastery, was made to the Butchers by the Governors of St Bartholomew's Hospital, Smithfield. It was the parsonage house of the prior of the church, and contained "cellars and solars and other appurtenances," being in the form of a quadrangle surrounding a courtyard. The Great Fire swept away this ancient dwelling-place of the Butchers' Company, and reduced them to much poverty. When they had sufficiently recovered from their misfortunes they erected a new hall in Pudding Lane, Billingsgate, but owing to recent changes in that neighbourhood they have lost their dwelling-place and returned to the vicinity of their old home in Newgate Street. The Great Fire also destroyed their documents, with the exception of an old account-book (1592-1646), which has fortunately been preserved.

The Butchers did not receive a Charter before the reign of James I., which was renewed by subsequent monarchs. It contains the usual formula, incorporating all the freemen of the art or mystery of Butchers, and giving the Company powers of controlling all persons exercising the trade living in the city or within one mile thereof.

In the records of the Company we find much interesting information. They took part in King James's Irish Plantation scheme, but have derived no benefit from their investment in the royal adventure. They were assessed in 1573 with the other Companies to buy corn to be laid up

## THE CITY COMPANIES

in store at the Bridge House, lest "the bad harvest and unkind season of the year should beget great want." Some members were fined for not attending at "Paule's" (St Paul's Cathedral) on certain special occasions, and we find extracts in the records relating to barge-money, which was levied on all members in order to provide a barge and attendants to accompany the Lord Mayor on the river to Westminster. They had a "stande" for their use on occasions of civic pageants, when there were ridings in the Chepe. Thus, in 1697, the livery were ordered to be in their stands in Cheapside by nine o'clock the next morning, on the occasion of the King coming through the city from Flanders.

One entry in the Company's minutes is of special interest, being the record of the admission of Daniel Defoe, the author of *Robinson Crusoe*. He was the son of a butcher, James Foe, or ffoe, residing in Fore Street, and became a member of the Company on January 12th, 1687, by virtue of his father's freedom.

The total income of the Butchers' Company is £2018, of which £1218 is corporate property, and £800 belongs to their trust funds. James Leverett bequeathed to the Company a small estate in Lambeth for the relief of poor freemen of the Company or their widows, which has now been sold. By the Flaying Act of the reign of George III., one-fourth of the fines levied on those who injured the skins of animals in flaying them was assigned to the Company. Although the Act has been long repealed, about £3000, derived from fines levied while the Act was in force, remains in the hands of the Company, who devote the income derived from its investment to the relief of their poor freemen. Ruth Bayley, who died in 1839, was a great benefactress of the Company, and bequeathed the large sum of £12,000, to the Master and Wardens and Court of Assistants, in trust for the benefit of poor widows and freemen of the said Worshipful Company for ever. This sum has been invested, and the income derived from it is devoted to the fulfilment of the purposes which the benevolent lady had in view. Peter Mellish (1803) and William Bayley (1846) were bountiful benefactors of the Company.

## THE CARPENTERS' COMPANY

The Company have not yet seen their way to devote any sums for the purpose of subsidising or encouraging education. Their income is not very large, and they are a very numerous family. At the time of the Municipal Commission of 1834 no less than 1600 persons, including women, were members of the Company, and all of these apparently carried on the trade with which the Company is associated. The livery now number 146, and there are about 250 freemen; a considerable number of the members are connected with the trade, but by no means all. We have no detailed account of how the Company spend their corporate income, and are, therefore, unable to say what proportion of their wealth they devote to charitable purposes; but we know that they have always administered their trusts with exactitude and care and in strict accordance with the wishes of the donors; and we doubt not that the same spirit of charity and liberality which is so conspicuous in the conduct of their distinguished compeers animates the Butchers' Company also, whose records and history, during the long period of its useful existence, extending over seven centuries, present many features of unusual interest.

## X I

### THE CARPENTERS' COMPANY

WE now meet with a Company which, in wealth, antiquity, and honour, is entitled to rank high amongst the great Livery Companies of London, and the very distinguished services which it confers upon the community merit the respect and gratitude of all. Few can boast of a worthier record, or a more interesting history. A Charter was granted to the Company by Edward IV. in the year 1477, but there are several notices of their existence as a guild at an earlier period. The poet Chaucer may

## THE CITY COMPANIES

be cited to prove this, for he wrote, in his Prologue to *Canterbury Tales*,—

“An Haberdasher and a Carpenter,  
A Webbe, a Deyer, and a Tapiser,  
Were alle yclothed in a liverie  
Of a solempne and grete fraternitie.”

The City possessed two Master Carpenters in 1271—very important personages, who were the contractors of the Middle Ages, and employed armies of operative carpenters. When we consider that almost all of the domestic buildings of a period extending from the earliest times to the end of the Stuart monarchy were built principally of wood, we shall understand that the carpenters' industry was a large and flourishing trade. The origin of the Company was a brotherhood, or friendly society. It was of a religious character, having as patron saints the Virgin and All Saints, and maintaining lights in the churches of St Mary Spital and All Hallows, which were near their halls. Some of the earliest records of the Company relate to its religious character, e.g., “Payd for ii hodys (hoods) for the prestys (priests), x<sup>s</sup>; to a priest for the dirige of Thomas Smyth iiiij<sup>d</sup>; for v tapers of wax for the light at St Mary Spital iiijs,” etc. The funerals of the members were celebrated with great pomp, and the hearse-cloth, made of most costly material (the prices of which are duly recorded), was always used, and at the close of the ceremony the Livery were refreshed at the Green Dragon, or elsewhere, at the Company's charges.

A learned and accurate history of the Carpenters' Company has been written by its late Clerk, Mr Edward B. Jupp, a second edition of which has been edited by Mr William W. Pocock. This work has been carefully compiled from the records in the Company's possession, in which they are very rich. The Great Fire happily spared their hall, with all the records of the ages which it contained. All, therefore, who desire to make themselves acquainted with the history of the Company can refer to Mr Jupp's most interesting volume. It is only



Willm Portingal Esq. Carpenter to the office of his Maies buildings, who served  
in place 40 years & deceased this last 28 of March 1625 being aged 54 years who  
was a well build in this stature this bring a gift of 10 shillings to the poor & 10 of this  
present M<sup>r</sup> of the said Company. Anno 1625.

*From the Painting in the possession of  
The Carpenters' Company.*



## THE CARPENTERS' COMPANY

in our power to give a brief *r  sum  * of the most important features in the history.

As we have seen, the first Charter was granted in the reign of Edward IV. to certain freemen of the mystery of carpentry of the City of London, that they might establish a brotherhood or guild to remain for ever, to consist of one Master, three Wardens, and the commonalty of freemen, etc. These Charters closely resemble each other, and need not now be quoted at length. The Charter of James I. gave them power to search, correct, and govern all the workers in carpentry, to inspect timber, and regulate all matters relating to the trade. Thus they performed a very useful mission in checking bad workmanship and the use of worthless materials. In these days of jerry-building the existence of such an active controlling power would be especially valuable.

In 1666, in consequence of the Great Fire, an Act of Parliament was passed, ordering brick buildings to be erected in the place of the wooden structures previously in vogue. This considerably diminished the work of carpentry, and, moreover, the city proceeded to appoint surveyors to inspect buildings, who were intrusted with the special duties formerly performed by the Carpenters' Company.

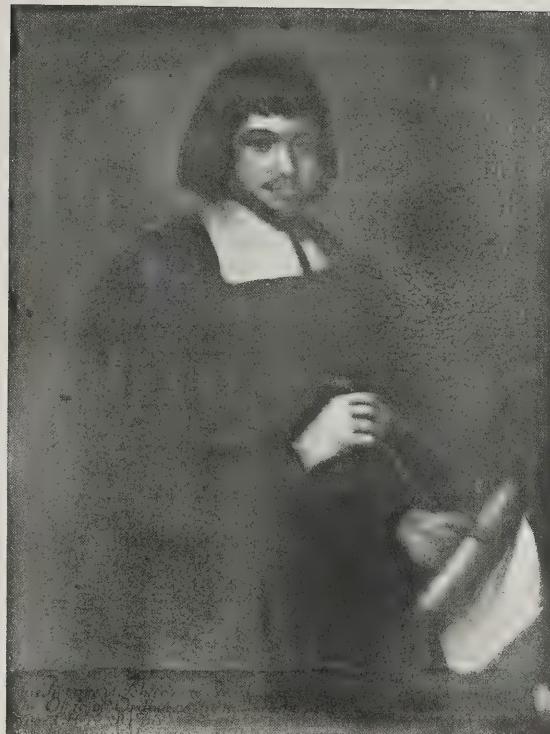
In reading the records of the Company, we find that they bravely took their part in all the great civic pageants, processions, and "ridings in the Chepe." All the great events in English history, the coronation of a sovereign, his return from victorious war, the birth of a prince, the arrival of a queen—all these were duly celebrated with becoming ceremony by the loyal citizens of London, with whom the Worshipful Company of Carpenters always took their place. We find entries in the account-books of "barge-money" for the hire of barges to accompany the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs on the water; of corn-money, for the supply of the city with bread in times of scarcity; of the setting of the watch on Midsummer Eve; of the supply of ships to fight the Spaniards, and of the rejoicings when victory crowned the arms of England. All these

## THE CITY COMPANIES

and countless other events are referred to in the records of the Company. We find, also, that they sold "lxxxxv. pounds' worth of plate" during the troubles of the Civil War. Verily, a history of England might be compiled from the valuable muniments of this Company.

Carpenters' Hall is a magnificent building, and the members of the Company have in all ages manifested a desire to enlarge and beautify the ancestral home of their association. It is situated in London Wall, adjoining Throgmorton Avenue. The old hall was begun in 1429 and gradually completed. A new parlour was built in 1500, and we gather from the accounts that the Company always prided themselves in their garden, and spared no expense to make it beautiful. It contained arbours, vines, walnut-trees, roses, a sun-dial, and a bowling-alley for the amusement of the Carpenters in their hours of recreation. Sundry additions were continually made to the hall itself. Some beautiful wall-paintings were discovered in 1845, depicting scenes from Bible history relating to the carpenter's craft. In 1876 the Company decided to build a new hall, and all the interesting associations which clustered round the ancient edifice were swept away. The present hall is very splendid and magnificent, but the historian can but regret the disappearance of the old mansion house which survived the Fire, which recalled many memories of the past, and fell a victim to that keen desire for improvement which has always animated the Carpenters' Company.

The enhanced value of property in the city has greatly augmented the income of the Company, which is now £11,638. Their Trust Income is less than £1000. In addition to the almshouses at Godalming, bequeathed to the Company by Richard Wyatt in 1618, they have built almshouses at Twickenham for ten poor persons, and maintain them at a cost of considerably over £500 a year. Among the benefactors are Thomas Gittings, citizen and carpenter (1587), John Day (1629), John Read (1651), who, in addition to other gifts, left £5 yearly to the master, wardens, and assistants, to buy gloves, and £4 yearly to a poor Cam-



JOHN SCOTT

Carpenter and Carriage Maker to the Office of Ordnance in the  
reign of Charles II. From the Painting in the possession  
of the Carpenters' Company



## THE CLOCKMAKERS' COMPANY

bridge scholar (it is now increased to £34 a year for three years), William Pope (1678), and several other worthies.

Their great wealth and the wisdom and administrative capacity which they display in its expenditure place the Carpenters' Company in the front rank of the City Guilds, especially in the promotion of technical education. To the advancement of this branch of study they pay particular attention, and the amount of money which they spend in this direction should satisfy the most exacting demands of modern reformers. The Carpenters' Company take a leading part in supporting the City and Guilds of London Institute. Lectures on architectural sanitation, and other subjects calculated to improve our buildings, are periodically delivered by eminent specialists in the hall. They have acquired premises in Great Titchfield Street, which are called the Carpenters' Company Trades Training School, where the Joiners', Tylers' and Bricklayers', Wheelwrights', Painter-stainers', and Plasterers' Companies have classes for the teaching of their different trades. The number of all the students has been about 250. The Company have an extensive educational work at Stratford, which offers every encouragement for increased effort, the various exhibitions having been of a very satisfactory character. Though their educational expenditure is necessarily very large, yet the Court of the Company have recently increased their contributions to philanthropic objects—pensioners and almsfolk. Good deeds bring their own reward. The Carpenters' Company dispense, with wise and generous hand, the wealth which has fallen to their lot, and have justly earned the gratitude and praise of the community.

## XII

### THE CLOCKMAKERS' COMPANY

THE study of horology abounds in interest and opens out many fields for scientific research. Who first invented the wonderful mechanism of a

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clock, we know not ; probably it was gradually evolved and developed, like the moves at chess. King Alfred is said to have counted the weary hours by the marks on his wax tapers. The invention of water-clocks, or *clepsydrae*, is attributed to the third century ; and sun-dials have proclaimed the passing hours of day from time immemorial, and uttered quaint maxims with regard to their fleeting nature. There is a curious motto on a sun-dial at Addington, Kent, written by Bishop Redyngton, A.D. 1665 :—

“ Amyddst y<sup>e</sup> flowres,  
I tell y<sup>e</sup> hours.  
Tyme wanes awaye,  
As flowers decaye.  
Beyond y<sup>e</sup> tombe  
Ffreshe flowrets bloomie.  
Soe man shall ryse  
Above y<sup>e</sup> skyes.”

Sun-dials were known to the Romans, and a Roman bronze pocket sun-dial was found in the famous Poole's Cavern, in Derbyshire, wherein the famous outlaw, Poole, stored his plunder. It is a long step from sun-dials to clocks, and in this, as in many other arts, ingenious foreigners led the way. In 1356 a clock was erected at Bologna, in Italy. Venice soon followed the example, and in 1368 it is recorded that clocks were known in England ; and soon the ingenuity of clockmakers was taxed to produce quaint modes of striking, and the processions of strange figures which testify to the skill of these early craftsmen.

In the records of the Blacksmiths' Company we found that the smiths were the earliest clockmakers, and the latter did not form a separate and independent fraternity until somewhat recent times. The Company was formed in 1631. The records of the Blacksmiths' Company tell of the negotiations which subsequently led to the formation of the guild, the encroachments of foreign manufacturers of clocks, the troubles of their English competitors, the drawing up of a petition for a Charter, and finally the granting of the same by Charles I. on August 22nd, 1631, to

## THE CLOCKMAKERS' COMPANY

"the Master, Wardens and Fellowship of the Art or Mistery of Clock-making of the City of London." This document gave them power to make bye-laws for the government of their own members and the regulation of the art, for the punishment of deceits and offences ; to seek for, examine and destroy faulty and deceitful work of clock and watchmakers or mathematical instrument-makers within the city, its liberties or suburbs, or within ten miles thereof.

Thus the newly-formed Company were fairly launched, and have continued ever since to exert their influence for the benefit of the craft with which they have always preserved a beneficial connection. The history of the fraternity has been somewhat chequered. It was rather a Craft Guild than a Livery Company, as the Livery, although granted by the Charter, was not constituted by the Court of Aldermen until as late as 1766.

The want of a hall, as a central council chamber, was sorely felt ; and soon after the granting of the Charter, the existence of the Company was threatened by internal disputes, several members complaining that owing to their lack of a hall they were summoned to assemble "in alehouses and taverns to the great disparagement of them all." Although the Court have never seen their way to the erection of a hall, we find that they endeavoured to meet the views of the members who objected to meet in "alehouses and taverns," by hiring the halls of other companies. Thus, in the Founders' books there is an entry which narrates that in 1702 "the Clockmakers' Company were to have the use of the parlour for their meetings at a rental of ten pounds per annum."

The records of the Company present few features of important interest beyond their constant vindication of the rights of English workmen against the continued and formidable competition of aliens. They were always strong opponents of Free Trade, and clamoured loudly, but ineffectually, for the protection of native industries. The compulsory powers with which they were once vested have long since fallen into desuetude ; but they have endeavoured to use their influence and prestige

## THE CITY COMPANIES

as a rallying-point for the trade when it has been necessary to approach Parliament or the Government, to protest against or explain objections to contemplated legislative enactments or imposts, or other matters by which the industries with which they have been identified have appeared to be prejudicially affected.

The income of the Company is believed to be about £1100, of which about £200 represents their trust funds. The Company have not seen fit to publish their accounts, as they regard their corporate property as absolutely their own, and not subject to any trust whatever. As we have already stated, they are entirely within their rights in taking this view, but the position of the Companies has been undoubtedly greatly strengthened by the publication of their accounts, inasmuch as the public have been enabled to learn the very great benefit they confer on the community.

Most of the charities bequeathed to the care of the Company by pious benefactors are for the benefit of their poor freemen or their widows. They contribute about £100 a year out of their corporate income to supplement their benefactions. There is a Watch and Clockmakers' Asylum at Colney Hatch, where the pensioners receive £50 a year. The Company have founded a library containing a collection of works upon the theory and practice of the art of clock and watchmaking, or connected with horology and general science. To this they have added a museum, containing a collection of specimens, many of them unique, of watches and clocks, illustrating the progress of the art from its commencement. The library and museum have been deposited at the Guildhall, where they can be inspected.

They also contribute annually to the funds of the British Horological Institute, which has been established for the purpose of affording technical instruction to the clockmaking trade. They have established prizes for the promotion of excellence of workmanship, and are endeavouring to advance the interests and welfare of the trade with which they are associated.

## COACH AND HARNESS MAKER'S COMPANY

Amongst the honourable names of distinguished brethren we find David Ramsey, the first Master, a friend of George Heriot, the famous jeweller of Edinburgh and favourite of James I.; Edward East, who bequeathed £100 to the Company in 1693; A. Fromantel; Tompion and George Graham, F.R.S., both buried in Westminster Abbey; Devereux Bowley, who gave £500 to the Company; William Frodsham, F.R.S.; Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy and his son, who were also benefactors in 1855-64.

### X III

#### THE COACH AND COACH-HARNESS MAKER'S COMPANY

INASMUCH as the use of coaches in England did not become fashionable before the latter half of the sixteenth century, this Company cannot claim so ancient a lineage as that of some others whose history we have recorded. But few other companies have shown more commendable zeal to promote technical education and to meet the pressing requirements of modern times than the Coachmakers' Company.

The history of coaching in England has had many chroniclers, and possesses a peculiar fascination for the men of this generation, who, wearied with the busy bustling of the age and the noise and rush of the railway, prefer the merry sound of the post-horn to the shriek of the steam-engine. The wheel carriages of the time of Richard II., called whirligotes, were hardly worthy of the name of coaches, and were little better than litters on wheels. The car of the Earl of Northumberland in 1512 was a lumbering vehicle which required "seven great trottyng hors to draw and a nagg for the chariott-man to ride." But we learn from Stow that in the time of Queen Bess coaches became more general, for he tells us that "divers great ladies made them coaches and rode in them up and down the countries to the great admiration of all beholders." The bad state of the roads and the unwieldy, heavy vehicles did not conduce to

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pleasurable travelling, and Queen Elizabeth on one occasion suffered so much during her journey in a coach made by Rippon, when she went to open Parliament, that she vowed she would never use it more. Of the adventures of Cromwell as a charioteer, his prowess in Hyde Park, when he fell from the box seat in the midst of his team, we have often been reminded. In 1662 there were only six stage coaches in the kingdom ; a writer demanded the speedy suppression of such conveyances. "These coaches," he says, "make gentlemen to come to London upon very small occasion, which otherwise they would not do but upon urgent necessity ; nay, the conveniency of the passage makes their wives often come up, who, rather than come such long journeys on horseback, would stay at home. Here, when they come to town, they must go in the mode, get fine clothes, go to plays and treats, and, by this means, get such a habit of idleness and love of pleasure that they are uneasy ever after."

However, in spite of this, John Crossel's counterblast, coaching thrived, and in due time, viz., on May 31st, 1677, the Coachmakers' Company was formed and incorporated by Charter. The constitution of the governing body consisted of the Master, three Wardens, and Court of Assistants, elected from the Livery. Formerly there were Stewards of the Company, who had at their expense to provide breakfasts and dinners to the court, but after a time, as no one could be found to undertake this office, it fell into desuetude. The Company had the power of searching for defective work, and their authority extended to the cities of London and Westminster, and the liberties thereof, and within twenty miles' distance from the same. Their jurisdiction was divided into four walks, namely, Middle Walk, Pickadilly Walk, Out Walk, and Low Land Walk, which were visited every quarter. It was considered in the old coaching days very important that there should be some central authority to examine defective wheels and axle-trees, and the construction of coaches, in order to provide for the safety of numerous passengers. Coaches were often laden with quantities of luggage which made them top-heavy, and an inventor constructed a coach with accommodation for the *impedimenta* of the

## COACH AND HARNESS MAKER'S COMPANY

passengers underneath ; but this never found favour, as the draught was supposed to be heavier. A caustic critic remarked, on observing this, that the further he went west, the more sure he became that *the wise men must have come from the East!*

The hall of the Company is situated in Noble Street, and was purchased from the Scriveners' Company in 1703. It is noteworthy as being the place of meeting of the Protestant Association, when the Anti-Catholic Riots of 1780, so vividly described by Dickens in *Barnaby Rudge*, were hatched. In this hall the Association planned the famous procession that accompanied Lord George Gordon from St George's Fields to the House of Commons, which resulted in so much riot and bloodshed.

The income of the Company is about £1000. They have no charities in their trust, but out of their corporate income they give about £100 a year to the support of technical education in the art of coach-building. They have promoted the perfection of their art by organising exhibitions of specimens of the work of Coachmakers, notably in 1865, when the Operative Coachmakers' Industrial Exhibition was held in their hall, and in 1879, when an exhibition of drawings, books, and models was held at the Mansion House, and prizes given by the Company to the successful competitors.

The Company have made very special efforts to stimulate skill and ingenuity among those engaged in the trade by awarding prizes and certificates. In their prize list for 1895, which was drawn up with much care and forethought, we notice that there were in all eight competitions, the object being to obtain the best models or drawings for the various kinds of vehicles drawn by horses, from dog-carts to tram-cars. In one competition they offered a prize for the best models of an improved four-wheel cab suited for the traffic of London. If the Company succeed in introducing so desirable a vehicle, they will certainly have earned the gratitude of the community. As a further inducement to earnest endeavour, the prize-winners in all the competitions may have the honorary freedom of the Company conferred upon them if, in the opinion

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of the judges, they are deserving of it. Such an honour should certainly stimulate effort.

The hall of the Company was rebuilt in 1867, and has been enriched by the formation of a library of reference books relating to the history and craft of coachmaking, and also a collection of photographs and drawings of the State carriages of the sovereigns of Europe, which were first exhibited in the International Exhibition of Carriages in 1873 and subsequently at the Paris Exhibition in 1889, and at Chicago in 1893, and the Coaching Exhibition, London, a few years ago. This library must be invaluable to carriage-builders and the followers of allied trades.

This Company has made laudable efforts to benefit their craft and to meet the requirements of the present age.

## XIV

### THE COOKS' COMPANY

**COOKING**, like gardening, is a somewhat ancient art, and is usually regarded as an important mystery in the promotion of human felicity. Indeed, Talleyrand once remarked that the peace of Europe depended more on the *chefs* than on any other beings. If that be so, who can tell the numerous wars and internal commotions the worthy Cooks of London have saved us from by the excellence of their skill, or estimate the vastness of the debt our country owes them?

The Guild of Cooks must have been of very early origin, how early none can say, as unhappily a fire destroyed all their documents, their Charters, title deeds, and other muniments. Their old hall was situated in Aldersgate Street, and escaped the Great Fire; but either it, or some smaller conflagration, deprived them of their records. This is particularly unfortunate, as the documents of so ancient a Company must have been very full of curious and interesting information. We have

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therefore to fall back on other sources for the early annals of the Cooks.

In early times they plied their trade in the regions of Thames Street and Eastcheap, and were known as Pastelers or Pie-bakers. Martin Sickpenny, in his adventures in London, to which we have already referred, met with them in his travels through the city, and Fitzstephen, Leland, and Stow all mention their existence in the time of Henry II. They flourished and abounded in the neighbourhood of the wharves on the Thames' side, and the Cooks' Row afforded a hospitable welcome to hungry sailors. Sometimes their customers brought their dishes to be cooked, and, according to the scale of charges approved in 1350, the Cooks were entitled to demand payment for the paste, pie, and their labour. According to the regulations of 1379, they were not allowed to buy or sell victuals before ten o'clock in the morning, or to put rabbits in pasties, or the offal of poultry, or to sell beef-pasties as though the contents were venison, or to use geese. It is difficult to understand the reasons for some of these prohibitions.

The Cooks therefore existed in very early times, and probably had their guild, with its usual religious and social functions, long before they were incorporated as a Company. To this honour they attained in the twenty-seventh year of Edward IV.; fortunately an *inspeximus* Charter of George III. mentions this fact, otherwise all record of its early origin would have been lost. From this Charter of George III. it appears that King Edward IV. granted unto his well-beloved subjects, the honest and free men of the mystery of Cooks of the City of London, that they and all men of the same mystery should be in substance and name one body and one commonalty perpetual, with power to make two masters or governors, with the aid of two wardens and assistants to govern the affairs of the mystery, and to have a common seal, and to hold meetings, and to make laws and vary the same for the government of the mystery. Power is given to the masters or governors to exercise superintendence and jurisdiction over every member of the craft and the works of such,

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and the local limits of the same are defined by the Charter to be within the cities of London and Westminster, their suburbs, and four miles' compass thereof.

Thus the Cooks' Company began its career. They obtained a new Charter in 1614, but this gave rise to many quarrels and much litigation, and the Cooks were charged with having obtained the Charter "secretly and surreptitiously." By a decision of the Chief Justice they lost their Charter, and it is not known whether they regained it.

Their subsequent history has not been eventful; at least, no record of any exciting public events has come down to us. They have an income of about £1850, and trust funds to the amount of £200 a year. In addition to this sum, the Cooks give annually to their poorer brethren, on an average, £103 a year. The principal charities are:—

1. Corbett's Charity, bequeathed by Edward Corbett, in 1674, to the poor of the Company, and "especially to men and women that had not been altogether refractory, altogether slighting governors and government till need and poverty bring them to the governors." Edward Corbett had evidently a truly charitable mind. He speaks in his will of the estate which the Lord had given him; he gave £5 a year for ever for the relief of decayed ministers, or ministers' widows; he remembered the poor of several parishes, and also "the poor in the Hole at Ludgate," and in the compter in Wood Street, the miserable inmates of debtors' prisons.

2. Shield's Charity, bequeathed by John Shield, in 1617, to the Company, who were ordered to pay £1 to the reader of Divine service in the church of Allendale, in the county of York, for two sermons, and £10 to the guardians of good works and ornaments of the said parish church, and sundry like sums to the officers of St Mary's Church, Aldermanry, and others.

3. Davis's Charity, bequeathed by John Davis, in 1708, for poor persons.

## THE COOPERS' COMPANY

4. Peade's Charity, bequeathed by Leonard Peade for the poor of the parish of Warfield, Berks.
5. Phillip's Charity.
6. Hope's Charity.
7. Kennedy's Charity.

The Cook's Company seem to have on all occasions carefully fostered and encouraged this most important branch of domestic economy. They have assisted greatly in promoting the National Training School of Cookery, South Kensington, and made several grants of money in order to enable the school to commence operations, and to continue its useful work.

For several years past the Company have given, free of all expense, practical lessons in elementary cookery to more than seventy girls selected from the Ward Schools in the City of London. They have been much gratified by the success of these lessons, as testified by the examinations held at the conclusion of each course. The School Board of London and the County Council have adopted the general arrangements in the establishment of these classes thus successfully inaugurated by the Cooks' Company. In this work the Company have deserved high praise, and have done great service to many poor people, enabling them to provide good food for themselves, and they have helped to remove the ignorance and waste which often prevail amongst the working classes.

## X V

### THE COOPERS' COMPANY

THE Coopers' Company was incorporated in 1501 by a Charter granted to them by King Henry VII. This is a long and curious Latin document,

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whereby, by the king's special favour, licence is given "to our beloved lieges, John Harvy, Thomas Elynor, Richard Cook and other citizens, and cowpers of the art and mystery of cowpers of our City of London, to found a brotherhood or guild to the honour of God and of the Blessed Virgin, for the governing and superintending of the said mystery." To pray for the health of the king and of his royal consort, Elizabeth, while they lived, and for their souls when they shall have "migrated from this light," was one of the duties which the king enjoined upon his faithful lieges.

The Coopers were one of the early mysteries or brotherhoods which flourished long before the granting of this Charter of incorporation, and were certainly in existence in the time of Edward II. A subsequent Charter was granted by Charles II., the provisions of which regulate the management of the Company to the present day. Under the statute of Henry VIII. power was given to the wardens of the Company, with one of the Mayor's officers, to gauge all casks in the City of London, and within two miles' compass without the suburbs ; and to mark such barrels when gauged ; and by an order of Queen Elizabeth, "for the true gauging of vessels brought from beyond seas, converted by brewers for the utterance and sale of ale and beer," brewers were prohibited from selling any ale or beer in any such vessels before the same should be lawfully gauged and marked by the master and wardens of the Coopers' Company.

There was certainly need for such regulations, as we find that in 1396 the Coopers took steps to suppress the somewhat disgusting practice by which oil and soap barrels were sold to brewers for holding ale and other liquor. They waged war on the makers of defective barrels made of unseasoned wood and of those which contained only scant measure. Sir Richard Whittington was a staunch ally in preventing all these fraudulent practices, especially in connection with the introduction of casks made by foreign wine-merchants. All casks were ordered to be marked, and the old Coopers' marks are objects of interest to antiquaries, just as are those of builders.

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The Company have in their possession several bye-laws and ordinances dating from the time of Henry VII. to George II. which are full of interest, and amongst their archives are sundry records which relate to an earlier period. These old papers reveal many glimpses of old-time manners and customs. They tell us of the Coopers' Chapel in St Paul's, of their store of silver spoons, to which each new freeman was bound to contribute, of their selling of plate in order to meet the demands of extortionate monarchs, of their festive meetings and suppers at the Boar's Head or the Dagger, and of their entertainment of distinguished guests with a pipe of wine or a gallon of "muscadel." In 1566 they helped to build the Royal Exchange. Many items refer to the cost of pageants, and that which celebrated the coronation of James I. must have been specially magnificent. For this occasion a new banner was made by George Knight, painter-stayner, "well and workmanlye, so that no man could mend it." In 1643 they sold some plate in order to defray the Company's portion of £50,000 to be raised by the City Guilds. For the enlarging of their court parlour twenty dozen spoons were sold in 1649.

They have three important charities under their management, which are chiefly for the purpose of promoting education. The first is the Ratcliff Charity founded by Nicholas Gibson in 1540 and subsequently endowed by Lady Alice Knyvett, his widow. The object of the foundation was the maintenance of a free school and almshouses in the hamlet of Ratcliffe, in the parish of St Dunstan, Stepney. Other pious benefactors, John Charley (1552), H. Cloker (1573), Tobias Wood (1611), and H. Strode (1703), have increased this charity. The Company has now a large school of 500 boys at Bow and a middle-class day school for 150 girls at Bow Road, both of which are supported by the funds of this charity. They have also large almshouses which are maintained at a cost of £1150 a year. The second important charity was founded by Henry Strode in 1703, called the Egham Charity, having for its object the maintenance of a school and almshouses in the parish of Egham, Surrey. The school at Egham still exists and educates 100 boys, and also a set of alms-

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COOPERS' COMPANY—SCHOOLS AT BOW

houses, the maintenance of which costs about £300 a year. The third charity was founded by William Alexander in 1725, who devised to the Company his freehold estate in the parish of Woodham Mortimer, Essex, for the benefit and advantage of the poor of the Company. The total income of the Company is about £7400, of which £5000 is trust property. The administration of these important trusts, which have been ably managed by the Company for so many years, and the development of the great schemes for the furtherance of education which the possession of their trusts has entailed, constitute a notable feature in the history and work of the Company and reflect credit on their able management. They contribute 150 guineas annually to the City and Guilds of London Institute, and some years ago they offered prizes for the best work in the cooperage trade in connection with a workmen's exhibition at the East-end of London.

The Company possesses a hall in Basinghall Street, the site of which

## THE COOPERS' COMPANY

was granted by John Baker, citizen and cooper, in 1490. The building was originally of timber, and was finished in 1547, the completion being celebrated by a great feast. Year by year it was improved, enlarged or embellished, now with the gilding of the royal arms, then with a new parlour, cellars, and a clerk's house. Numerous suits of armour were stored. They had a beautiful hearse-cloth, or pall of blue velvet, embroidered with gold and silver, and set with pearls and yellow cloth, which perished in the fire of 1649. Happily the records and plate were all saved in the Great Fire, and with their usual energy the Coopers commenced to build a new hall, which was begun in 1669 and finally gave place to the present building, erected in 1868. The last State lottery was held in Coopers' Hall on October 18, 1826.

We should like to dwell on the picture of old English life which the records of this interesting Company present : to see them walking in procession at the funeral of Henry VII., clad in their black gowns and tippets, or going to their chapel in St Paul's. They had a fine barge on the river which cost £154, and was manned with a master, mate, and fourteen watermen. In their early days they had an altar, or light, in old St Paul's Cathedral, as it is mentioned that one "Trendeler gave to the support of the fraternity founded in the church of St Paul 20s. sterling." The early records give evidence of much unruly conduct, and tell of fines levied on turbulent Coopers for fighting violently in the presence of the wardens, using vilifying words and calling the wardens extortioners. The penalty for these offences was for the culprit to kneel on one knee and humbly beg pardon for his fault. In 1672 the hall was used for divine service, and frequently let for weddings and funerals. Two years later it was let to the parson of Bassishaw for public worship. This parson must have been somewhat irascible, as we find that on one occasion the Court refused to pay tithes to him on account of certain uncharitable words spoken by him. Many other most curious details we must pass over. The Coopers' Company possess a most interesting history, and rival many of the great Companies in the value of their records, the greatness of their educational

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work, the public spirit which they have shown in the development of their resources and the noble uses to which they have applied their wealth. One event especially shows the dignity which is attached to the membership of this Company and the affection and loyalty with which it is regarded. In former days it was customary for a member of a minor Company, when he attained to the high position of Lord Mayor, to migrate to one of the twelve great Companies. However, in 1743, when Robert Willimot became Lord Mayor, he refused to be translated, and preferred to remain a member of his mother guild. Two silver waiters, the gift of his lordship, recall this pleasing example of attachment of a Cooper to his own Company.

### XVI

#### THE CORDWAINERS' COMPANY<sup>1</sup>

THE Allutarii or Cordwainers appear to have been voluntarily associated together as a craft or mystery from very remote times, probably as early as the Conquest. Its object was to encourage and regulate the trades connected with the leather industry, and included the flaying, tanning, and currying of hides, and also the manufacture and sale of shoes, boots, goloshes, and other articles of leather. In the thirteenth and following centuries several branches separated and formed distinct communities, such as the girdlers, tanners, curriers, and leathersellers. Besides the protection and regulation of trade, various other benefits accrued in these rude and turbulent times from the control exercised by the several crafts over the masters, workmen, and apprentices in the settlement of disputes, the suppression of fraudulent practices, and the summary infliction of punishment on evil-doers.

The good and wholesome laws and ordinances enacted from time to

<sup>1</sup> The Report of the Royal Commission contains a very complete summary of the history of this Company, and of this the writer has extensively availed himself.



THE CORDWAINERS' HALL



## THE CORDWAINERS' COMPANY

time contemplated equally the benefit of the master, the workman, and the consumer. They were framed to secure—to the master, honest, skilful, and efficient work and service ; to the workman, freedom from undue competition in his industry and fair wages, together with a provision for his relief in sickness and old age ; and, to the consumer, a guarantee against bad materials, defective workmanship, and excessive prices.

The public spirit and integrity with which the powers and privileges of this guild were used may be inferred from the important municipal position and duties assigned it, and from the rule and government of the mystery conferred by successive Charters and numerous Acts of Parliament. The funds supplied by the generosity of their own members for promoting the free intercourse and festive enjoyment of the whole community among themselves, the liberal provision made for the sustentation of their poor brethren in time of need, and the gifts entrusted to them for charitable and other uses, go also to prove that they worthily fulfilled their duties through the long centuries of their history. The Guilds formed part and parcel of the Corporation of London, and were often called upon to bear their share in the contributions for wars in France and Ireland, and for other State or public purposes ; for the erection of the Guildhall and Royal Exchange, Bridewell and Bartholomew Hospitals ; for the purchase and distribution of corn, etc., to the poor in seasons of distress, and for maintaining the loyal hospitality of the city on the occasions of royal visits and public rejoicings.

The first existing Ordinance of the Cordwayners (*Allutarii*) is found in *Liber Horn*, folio 339, and was made in the fifty-sixth year of King Henry III., 1272. The preamble shows the association to have been voluntary in its origin, and sets forth that the provisions and statutes which the good men of the Cordwayners of London therein ordained, with the will and consent of Master Walter Henry, Mayor of London, and the other Barons of the same city, were designed “for the relief and advancement of the whole business, and to the end that all frauds and

## THE CITY COMPANIES

deceits may be hereafter avoided." It is ordained that in future the cordwainers, the tanners, and the curriers (*cistarii*) shall have separate rights and regulations as to working alum-leather and tan-leather, and for preparing cowhides, etc., and shall not interfere with each other under a penalty of half a mark, to be paid to the commonalty of the city aforesaid; and further, no cordwainer's apprentice should be received, but only with the will and consent of the Mayor and commonalty of London. There are sundry other provisions and orders which need not be enumerated. The carrying of shoes for sale is restricted to the part of the city between Corveysere Street (Queen Street) and Soper Lane (Bow Lane). Corveysere or Cordwainers' Street has long disappeared.

In the thirty-seventh year of Edward III. (A.D. 1364) is recorded "an account of moneys received by John Cauntebrigg, the city chamberlain, from thirty-two livery companies, as free gifts to the King towards carrying on the French wars." Among these the Cordwainers (*Allutarii*) stand fifteenth in order, their contribution being ten marks (£6, 13s. 4d.).

In the eleventh year of King Henry IV. (A.D. 1409), in the mayoralty of Drego de Barantin, is an ordinance or composition exemplified by the King for the settlement of long-existing differences between the workers of old leather, called "coblbers," and the workers of new leather, called "cordwainers."

Among the twelve men of the cordwainers, whose hands and seals are set to the same ordinance is the name of John Yonge, who, in the year A.D. 1440 (*temp. Henry VI.*), gave to the Cordwainers' Company certain lands in Distaff Lane, in the City, for the purpose of a hall, on which site the present Hall stands now.

In the Harleian MSS. 541, *temp. first year of Richard II.* (A.D. 1483), the halls of the Inns of Court, and also of the twenty-five Livery Companies of London possessing halls, are enumerated, among which the Cordwainers' stands No. 21—a site having been given them about forty years earlier by one of their own members, as already stated.

This hall was rebuilt in A.D. 1577 from funds given for that purpose

## THE CORDWAINERS' COMPANY

by another of their members, Thomas Nicholson, a master of the Company.

That the Company had obtained some note at this period is evidenced by the fact that Camden, the historian, who died in October, 1623, at the age of seventy-three years, left the Company by his will £12 for a piece of plate to bear the following inscription :—“Gul. Camdenus Clarenceux filius Sampsonis Pictoris Londinensis dono dedit.” This, with the rest of the Company's plate, was sold after the Fire of London.

The first Charter of incorporation was granted by King Henry VI. on the 26th of April, in the seventeenth year of his reign (A.D. 1439), whereby, in consideration of the payment of fifty marks, he granted to the freemen of the Mysterie of Cordwainers (*Allutariorum*) of the City of London that they should be one body or commonalty for ever, that they should every year elect and make of themselves one master and four wardens to rule and govern the said mysterie, and all men and workers of the mysterie and commonalty, and all workmen and workers whatsoever of tanned leather relating to the said mysterie, to search and try black and red tanned leather and all new shoes which should be sold or exposed for sale, as well within the said city as without, within two miles thereof.

By the Great Fire of London in the year 1666 the hall of the Company, erected in 1557, was burnt, together with many of the ancient documents and records, the Royal Charters excepted. A considerable part of the Company's houses in the City was also destroyed, and so disastrous to the Company were the losses sustained that in order to meet the urgent need for reinstating the hall and continuing the due payment of charges on their property, the pensions, etc., it was found necessary to set on foot negotiations for selling the Company's interest in their Irish estates, which was accordingly done, and all that interest was conveyed to the Goldsmiths' Company.

The Company's plate—consisting of forty-four pieces, with ancient engravings of arms and inscriptions of the donors on many—was also

## THE CITY COMPANIES

sold, and the proceeds applied to pay off the Company's debts. The Company was greatly indebted to the generosity of certain of its own members for assistance in rebuilding the hall, which was completed at considerable cost in the year 1670. The present hall was rebuilt at the end of the eighteenth century, and now faces Cannon Street, Distaff Lane having been absorbed by the great modern highway. It is an interesting little building, without any pretensions to architectural merit, forming a pleasing contrast to its modern surroundings and high towering neighbours. In the lower hall there is an urn and tablet by Nollekens to the memory of John Came, Cordwainer, who died in 1796 and left much wealth for the Company to administer, as we shall notice later. The dining-hall has a fine modern window to the memory of the same benefactor. Amongst the distinguished members of the fraternity are several of the family of Chamberlain, of whom the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, late Colonial Secretary and founder of the Fiscal Reform movement, is the present leading representative. It is not known whether in studying the principles of Protection as understood by the old guilds he discovered the germ of Protection Tariffs. However, he is a Cordwainer, and has conferred distinction on the Company by his membership for nearly half a century, and has enriched the treasury of the Company by a handsome gift of plate, as his uncle and great-uncle did before him.

Since the passing of the Act of 5th George IV., cap. 47, the active control of the trade by the Company of the Mystery of Cordwainers, which had been exercised for more than six centuries, has fallen into disuse. Other duties and trusts which the Company fulfil remain. Independently of the charitable trusts which the Company administer under the inspection of the Charity Commissioners, other funds of the guild, arising from gifts of their predecessors, are applicable to the maintenance of the Company's hall, and for the cost of those annual celebrations and hospitalities on account of which special funds are provided, and which are called by the several benefactors' names. Each anniversary is preceded by a religious service, in accordance with the

## THE CORDWAINERS' COMPANY

wills of the several benefactors. The Company have always appropriated a very considerable portion of their own funds for purposes connected with the promotion of education, the support of hospitals, and such other benevolent institutions and purposes as have commended themselves to the approval of the governing body, and specially for objects in connection with the trade represented by the Company.

Amongst the principal charities we may mention John Came's Charity for the benefit of clergymen's widows, blind, and deaf and dumb persons, £1000 a year; Milner's Charity for poor distressed fathers of families, £140; Love & Woolnough's Charities, and the proceeds of fines levied under the old Flaying Act (1808), now repealed, which are given to the poor of the Company. The total income of the Company is about £9300, of which £1600 is trust property. They helped to build the City and Guilds of London Institute, being one of the twelve Companies who initiated the movement and gave £1000; and they subscribe £250 a year towards its support.

The Company give exhibitions to three undergraduates at Oxford or Cambridge, and, in cases of necessity, provide for the education of the children of members of the Company. They assisted in founding the Leather Trades Technical School at Bethnal Green, and contribute largely to its maintenance. They also pay the salary of a special inspector, whose duty it is to systematically visit and report on the numerous technical schools and classes in the boot and shoe industries in the United Kingdom, and by advice and recommendation assist in perfecting the efficiency of the work taught at the different centres. The Company held some years ago a competitive exhibition of practical work at the hall, when prizes were awarded to the successful competitors. Only British workmen of the United Kingdom were allowed to compete. This exhibition was beneficial alike to the producer and consumer, as giving a stimulus to excellence of design and workmanship. A loan exhibition of antique and historical boots and shoes, spurs, buckles, and foot-gear was added, and proved of the greatest interest.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

### XVII

#### THE CURRIERS' COMPANY

THE Curriers' Company have in many ways an interesting history. The absence of many old records renders the task of the historian difficult, but we are able to give a sketch of the progress of the Company from its commencement, and since the time of the Great Fire the minutes are complete. Their original settlement as a trade community was in Soper's Lane, near the Cordwainers, of which Company, in 1270, they formed a constituted part, as we learn from the first existing ordinance of the Cordwainers contained in the *Liber Horn*, wherein it is stated that the Cordwainers, Tanners and Curriers shall have separate rights, and were not to interfere with each other, under a penalty of half a mark. We find that, in 1363, they were prosperous enough to subscribe five marks to aid King Edward III. in carrying on his wars with France, and in 1376 returned two members to the Common Council. A return of the Companies was made to Richard II. in 1388, and in this is recorded "one little company of a light of one taper in the choir of White Friars in Fleet Street of the Yeomanry of Curriers." As early as 1415 powers of control, search and seizure of defective goods, were granted to "the good men of the mystery of Curriers," and sundry regulations made for the benefit of the trade. Amongst these we find that no person of the mystery should make any smouldering fire to the annoyance of the neighbourhood, or should work on any night or after twelve o'clock on Saturday. The Company nominated all persons who were allowed to collect "flottis" or kitchen stuff within the city, and in 1581 they ordered that there should be no goings of journeymen to weddings or burials, and that a poor's chest be provided. The ranks of the Curriers were greatly thinned at the close of the sixteenth century as we gather from the record—"The journeymen free of the Company are altogether dead of the late plague."

In 1516, Thomas Sterne, citizen and currier, gave to the Company a

## THE CURRIERS' COMPANY

messuage, then known as the "Boar's Head," with four tenements, in the parish of St Alphage, Cripplegate, on which property was built the hall of the Company. He ordered that ten shillings should be spent yearly for charcoal for the poor, and also in prayers for the repose of his soul. Thus, the Company was established with a fixed and permanent place of meeting, and the Curriers soon migrated from their former abode in Cheapside to their new home. The hall was in existence in 1583, as a record declares that "oathes are to be taken at Curriers' Hall." In 1583 they were honoured with a grant of arms, and seem to have steadily progressed in prosperity and power. The reformed bye-laws, passed in the time of Elizabeth, present many important features with regard to the government of the guild, and, finally, in 1606, James I. granted them a Charter, with the usual powers and privileges, the use of a common seal, the right to sue and be sued, to acquire lands and regulate the trade. The right of supervision was exercised as late as 1831. A new Charter was granted by Charles II., but repealed by William and Mary.

The hall was destroyed in 1666, and rebuilt in 1670. It was a brick building without any claims to beauty. There was an old-fashioned staircase, a very commodious kitchen, and a counting-house. The panels of the court-room were adorned with paintings of Plenty, Justice and Temperance. The Master's Chair was richly carved, but it has now disappeared together with a portrait of James I. The portrait of William Dawes, a benefactor, was happily discovered in recent times during the rebuilding operations. In one of the windows of the old hall an inscription recorded "This hall was new built and glassed in the year 1670." It was let to Calverley the younger who often preached there, and frequently a professor of dancing held his classes there. In 1820 the hall was rebuilt on a reduced scale, and was of an unpretentious character. At the same time the Company increased the houses built upon their estate. A new hall was erected in 1873, and then the Company were induced by their adjoining tenants, to whom part of the property was leased, to take down the building and rebuild it on a different plan. The new hall is a

## THE CITY COMPANIES

most successful architectural achievement. It is ingeniously arranged and is a very picturesque building, resembling those at Innsbruck, being decorated with banner-bearing stags, which are the crest of the Company.

The corporate income of the Company is £1354, and their trust funds are only £57. They have a number of pensioners on their list ; they subscribe to several hospitals, and to other charitable institutions. The settlement of strikes and trade disputes is an important service to the community. In 1803 and 1805 such strikes prevailed, and by their wise action in calling together a conference of employers and journeymen, and regulating prices, and in prosecuting the ringleaders, the Curriers' Company settled these disputes. These were the last occasions when the Company took any action with respect to the trade.

The confidence which benefactors have in the wisdom and integrity of the Companies is still shown by bequests left to them in modern times. In 1902 Mr Past-Master Ashby left to this Company the sum of £5000, two-thirds of which he directed them to spend in charity or works of public utility, and the remaining one-third for the benefit of the Company. This munificent gift owing to some legal technicality was not granted to the Curriers fully to enjoy, and owing to an adverse decision in the House of Lords, given in January 1903, Justice Swinfen Eady ordered that the two-thirds should be repaid to the executors of the donor, while the one-third should remain to the Company. This decision was somewhat disappointing, not only to the Company, but to many charitable institutions, which would have benefited if the money had been left to the administration of the Curriers.

### X V I I I

#### THE CUTLERS' COMPANY

THIS Company has few records to enable us to sketch its history. In former times the cutlers' trade embraced all manner of swords, daggers,

## THE CUTLER'S COMPANY

rapiers, hangers, wood-knives, pen-knives, razors, surgeons' instruments, skeynes, hilts, pommels, battle-axes, halberts, and many other weapons, over the making of which the Company exercised the usual powers of control. It can date its origin as far back as the year 49 Edward III., as at that time it was stated to have elected two members of the Court of Common Council. The earliest Charter was granted by Henry V. in 1415. This was confirmed by Henry VI. by reason of the losses and unfortunate casualties that happened to the men of the Mystery of the Cutlers of the City of London by sea, they then not being able to live but by the benevolence of well-disposed people. This distress cannot have lasted long, as in 1451 they were able to buy a hall and other property in Cloak Lane. We find that the usual disputes took place between rival companies and tradesfolk whose interests and trades were nearly identical. The cutlers quarrelled with the bladesmiths, sheathers, and furbishers, who were all concerned in the manufacture of daggers, knives, swords and other weapons.

The Charter of James I. is the present governing Charter of the Company. Most of the records of the Cutlers perished in the Great Fire, and we have no materials for furnishing a concise history from the time of their foundation to the present day. The Charter gives the Company the oversight, view, sense, correction and government of all persons using the trade of Cutlers within the city and suburbs of London, and also power to punish offenders for falsehoods, deceits and other misdemeanours. The ordinances of the Company, sanctioned by the Lord Keeper and Chief Justices in the reign of Queen Anne, 1703, seem to have enlarged their powers and enabled them to search shops and warehouses four times a year, and survey the goods made by Cutlers, and fine offenders. It appears that every member was obliged to have his own mark, nor was he allowed to procure foreign hilts to fix on his sword blades. The seat of the trade has long ago been transferred to Sheffield, where the Master Cutler and his yearly feast are well known.

The present hall of the Company is a handsome modern building

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situated in Warwick Lane. Thomas Frill, in 1451, conveyed the site of the first hall to the Company, which stood on some part of the land absorbed by Cannon Street Railway Station. This was destroyed in 1666, and replaced by "a convenient and beautiful" building, which had to give way before the advent of the railway. The Company's income has grown enormously during recent years, as their property is principally situated in the City of London, and may now be estimated at over £5400. They support several exhibitions at Oxford and Cambridge, founded by Mr Bucke and Mr Craythorne, supplemented out of their own funds. In 1879 they promoted an excellent exhibition of cutlery, followed by a series of lectures on the art and craft of cutlery, which was a great success. They also made an effort for the encouragement of apprentices in the trade of cutlery, which has not been quite as successful as they had reason for hoping. It may be mentioned that the famous old inns, the "Belle Sauvage" and "Rose and Crown," were the properties of the Company, the sites of which are extremely valuable. The increased value of the Cutlers' estates has enabled the Company to assist many benevolent schemes, and the interests of the trade with which their Company is associated have always received the careful attention of this ancient association.

## XIX

### THE DISTILLERS' COMPANY

THIS Company appears to have been founded by Sir Theodore de Mayerne, Court physician to King Charles I., who obtained from the King, in 1638, a royal Charter. This Charter conferred upon the Company very extensive powers and important duties in the regulation of the trade of Distillers and Vinegar-makers and of those engaged in the preparation of artificial and strong waters, and of making Beeregard and Alegar, in the

## THE DISTILLERS' COMPANY

cities of London and Westminster, the suburbs and liberties thereof, and within twenty-one miles therefrom. Dr Thomas Cademan, the Queen's doctor, together with the founder, drew up certain rules and regulations for the governing of the new Company. These were published in a volume entitled *The Distiller of London*, which has passed through several editions. The Company had a grant of arms in 1638, viz.:—*Azure*: a fesse wavy argent; in chief, the sun in splendour, encircling with a cloud distilling drops of rain, all proper; in base a distillatory double-armed or, on a fire proper. *Crest*: on a wreath, a garb of barley, environed with a vine fructed, both proper. *Supporters*: a Russian and an Indian. The motto is taken from Deuteronomy xxxii. 2, “Drop as Raine, Distill as Dewe.” In spite of royal favour and the influence of the Court, the Distillers were not enfranchised till 1658, and did not receive their livery till 1672. A new Charter was granted by James II. in 1688, which confirmed their existing rights, and a year later their Acts and ordinances were confirmed by the Lords Commissioners of the Great Seal and the Chief Justices, and remain the bye-laws of the Company. By an Act of the Court of Common Council in 1774, all distillers or vinegar makers were obliged to become freemen of the Company. These powers have now become obsolete, but the Company is in a very flourishing condition, and the recent large increase in the Livery Roll shows the keen interest which is taken in this ancient corporation. They have no trust or charitable property. They have some freehold property in Upper Thames Street built upon land originally purchased for the building of a hall, which was never erected. The Company has also funded property arising from accumulated surplus income, and there are also articles of plate which have been presented by various members of the Company. The Company make donations for charitable purposes and grant pensions to impecunious members.

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### XX

#### THE DYERS' COMPANY

THIS is a very ancient and honourable Company and, formerly the twelfth, now takes the thirteenth place in the order of civic precedence. In the setting out of the watch made on the Vigil of St Peter and St Paul, in the sixth year of Edward IV., in the list of Companies having liveries made in 1483, and on the occasion when the Companies rode to meet Henry VII. on his first visit to the city, the Dyers appeared amongst the first twelve. The Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen in the reign of Henry VIII. decided that they should immediately follow the Clothworkers' Company. It is unnecessary to give a sketch of the art and craft of dyeing in England, which must indeed have been a flourishing industry in mediæval and still later times, when brilliant colours were such a striking characteristic of both male and female costumes. The varied coloured liveries of the members of the City Companies, to which we have frequently called attention, would alone testify to the extent of the Dyers' industry and to their skill.

The records of the Company are somewhat meagre, as they have suffered from the destructive effects of two fires, in 1666 and 1681, which destroyed their halls and some of their documents. A Charter was granted to them by Edward IV. in 1472, and renewed by subsequent monarchs. Stow states that they were incorporated by Henry VI. on February 16, in the forty-ninth year of his reign, and that they were made a brotherhood or guild in the fourth year of the reign of that monarch, and appointed to comprise a guardian or warden and commonalty in the twelfth year of Edward IV. This latter date is held by the Dyers to be the year of their foundation. The *inspeximus* Charter of James I. is the governing one, but they were in existence long before this date, and are first mentioned as a guild in 1188. The *Liber Albus*, compiled in 1419 by Sir Richard Whittington, protects the Dyers from interference with their trade by the

## THE DYERS' COMPANY

merchant-strangers. Later on the trade was much disturbed by deceitful dyeing, and the officers of the Company suffered pains and penalties for not detecting frauds and misdemeanours. They received a grant of arms, which are thus described at the Heralds' College :—

*Arms*—Sable, a chevron engrailed argent, between three bags of madder of the last, corded or.

*Crest*—On a wreath of the colours, three sprigs of the graintree, erect vert, fructed gules.

*Supporters*—Two lions rampant guardant, argent, spotted with various colours. Fire issuing from their ears and mouths proper, both ducally crowned or.

*Motto*—*Da Gloriam Deo.*

The ancient “ordinances” are curious. The original ordinances of Queen Elizabeth are addressed “to all trewe Christian people to whom this writinge shall come, Nicholas Bacon, Knight, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of Englande ; William Lord Burghley, High Treasurer of England ; Christopher Wray, Knight, Chief Justice of the King’s Bench, and James Dyer, Knight, Chief Justice of the Common Bench, send greeting in our Lord Everlasting,” etc. Amongst other claims we read that every person occupying ye arte of Dyinge of any manner of clothe, woollen or linnen, olde or newe, silke or fustyan, lether, woole, hatts, felts, or cappes, or any other thing dyed or coloured, be under the rule and government of ye wardens of ye Dyers of London. The authoritie of the wardens of the Company to make search in every shop and ware-house, charging fourpence a quarter. All false and naughtie wares falsely and deceitfully dyed were to be seized, and one moytie shall be to the Queen and the other to the wardens. Some of the colours mentioned in these ordinances are curious and include “woddid blacke, mathrid black, russette, asshe color, tawnye, greene, as well as French greene as grass-greene, popymayes, purples, blews, murraies, vyoletts, silver coullers and watchetts.” Some of these it may be difficult for us to trace.

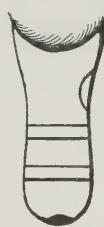
The Dyers had very extensive duties to perform with regard to the

## THE CITY COMPANIES

regulation of their trade. The Company also took their share in the historical events which agitated civic life. They had to redeem some of their property which was seized by the King at the Reformation on the ground that it had been bequeathed for "superstitious" uses. They contributed to the forced loans by which the Stuart monarchs loved to raise money from the Companies. They contributed largely at the Restoration for a present to the King, and provided sixteen of their number to ride on horseback in procession with footmen when his majesty came to the city. But the King treated them somewhat badly. He sent their Prime Warden, Master Samuel Shute, to the Tower upon a false charge of riot, and deposed their wardens, Cleeve and Aston, and behaved strangely and tyrannically. The Standing Orders of this Company are interesting. Some of them relate to the duties of Bargemaster and Swanmarker. The Crown, the Dyers and the Vintners only have the right to keep swans on the River Thames. So ancient is this honourable privilege that the record of their first grant to this "game of swans" cannot be traced. The ancient swan marks of the Crown, the Vintners and Dyers are given in *The History and Antiquities of the Dyers' Company* by Mr E. C. Robins, F.S.A., and were as follows :—



CROWN



DYERS

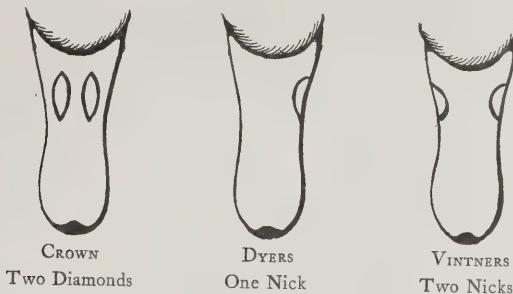


VINTNERS

They are thus described : Crown birds, five diamonds ; Dyers, four bars and one nick ; Vintners, letter V and two nicks. In 1878 the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals brought an action against the Company for cruelty in thus marking the birds, but failed to establish its case.

## THE DYERS' COMPANY

Nevertheless Mr Robins took up the matter in order to simplify the marking, which is now performed thus :—



There was a great river pageant on the occasion of the royal opening of the Coal Exchange, when the barge of the Dyers was adorned with five white swans, one at each corner of the saloon, and one above it, all seated in mossy nests. When the Companies went in procession on the river in their barges, and all the pomp of pageants on the water prevailed, the Bargemaster had more duties to perform ; but now he has chiefly to act as Swanmarker. In the months of May and July he goes up the Thames with assistants and inspects the swans and their nests, pinioning the cygnets and marking them, examining the marks on the older birds. The Company pays for the care of the swans in frosty weather. This part of the Company's work presents many interesting features.

The Company have had altogether four halls. The earliest was in Upper Thames Street, on an estate given to them by Sir Robert Tyrwhitt in 1545. This was destroyed in 1666. Dyers' Hall Wharf still preserves its memory and the site of this ancient home of the Company. The Great Fire saved them some trouble, as the hall was in such bad repair they had resolved to rebuild it. A second hall was erected, and destroyed in 1681. Then a third arose on another site, and was erected on Dowgate Hill, on some land occupied in ancient times by a college for priests, called Jesus Commons, which gave the name to College Street. This hall collapsed in

## THE CITY COMPANIES

1768, but two years later another hall was finished which for sixty years remained the home of the Company. It was then found to be very insecure, and in 1838 was taken down and the present hall erected in the Grecian style. Amongst the treasures of the Company is a magnificent iron chest which is a most beautiful work of art, and the hall has some portraits of benefactors. All the old plate of the Company has disappeared.

The income of the Company is about £7000 a year, of which £1000 is held in trust. The principal charities which they administer are the following : Sir R. Tyrwhitt's Charity, founded in 1545 for the erection of almshouses, Henry West's Charity (1551) for the like object, Henry Trevillian's Charity (1636), William Lee's Charity (1719), John Peck's Charity (1739), and George Maguire's Charities. The Company originally had almshouses on their Upper Thames Street Estate; in 1777 these were removed to the City Road, and in 1850 to King Henry's Walk, Ball's Pond Road. The inmates of these houses are fortunate enough to receive nearly double the sum originally provided, and the charities are largely supplemented from the private income of the Company. Besides supporting a number of almspeople, they give largely to the decayed members of the Company, and to their widows and children. They promote technical and other education, and benefit mankind in many ways by the employment of the wealth which has been entrusted to their care.

## X XI

### THE FANMAKERS' COMPANY

THIS is the youngest of all the Companies, and its records are not exciting, although it is associated with the production of a feminine weapon often used with much effect in the warfare of courtly fashion and intrigue. The author of *The Language of the Fan* shows how eloquent this appendage to a lady's dress can be in expressing the varied moods and whims of its fair wearer.

## THE FANMAKERS' COMPANY

The ladies of the Court of Queen Elizabeth were the first to use the fan in England, whither it was introduced from France and the East, and in the time of the Stuarts the fashion of fans spread rapidly, and the art of using them became part of the education of a lady of fashion.

In the time of good Queen Anne, the industry of making fans had increased so much that the want of an organization for the regulation of the trade was felt, and Her Majesty granted a Charter to the Master, Wardens, and Assistants of the Company of Fanmakers. The Company hold no landed property, and their income is small; but they are an active and useful corporation, and have done much to improve and develop the native industry of fanmaking.

The principal events in their history are the most successful exhibitions which they inaugurated in 1878, 1890 and 1897, the total cost of the first of which was £1300. They offered valuable prizes for every description of fans, ancient and modern, which proved a great encouragement to the designers and manufacturers of these articles. The exhibitions were in every way a great success. They have spent considerable time and money in order to resuscitate the decayed industry in England. They presented the late Queen Victoria with a most costly fan for her use at the Diamond Jubilee, and the fan used by Queen Alexandra at her Coronation was presented by the guild. Their store of treasure has been much increased during recent years, and includes the Banners of the arms of several masters, a common seal, an ivory hammer, silver snuff-box, silver-gilt loving cups, a ram's head with silver snuff-box, silver-gilt rose-water dish, a gold neck chain for the master, and several books relating to the industry. The Fanmakers' Company seems to be admirably conducted, and in spite of slender resources, to confer great benefits on the trade, and to encourage a brilliant school of English design and workmanship.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

### XXII

#### THE FARRIERS' COMPANY

THE Farriers of London were constituted a mystery by the Court of Mayor and Aldermen of London in 1356. The City Records describe the Company by the honourable title of the "Marshals of the City," to whom was assigned the government of the craft. Little more is known of it until the days of the Merry Monarch, when the Company was incorporated by Royal Charter. Therein the Farriers are described as "our well-beloved subjects the Brotherhood of Farriers within our cities of London and Westminster." The Charter states that "Whereas it is found that many unexpert and unskilful persons have and doe dayly assume the said Art, Trade, and Mystery, and who have thereby destroyed many horses in or neare the said cities," no one shall practise the art but the men of the Company within a radius of seven miles of London. This Charter is dated 1674. It is believed that the Company once had a hall, but nearly all records were destroyed by the Great Fire. The Company was taxed together with others by Charles II. under the "Act for speedy provision of money for the disbanding and paying of the forces of this kingdom both by land and sea." As late as 1758 an Act of Common Council was passed for the regulation of the Company, the objects of which were rigorously exercised until very recent years, and though they have not abandoned their right of control, the altered habits of society and the increase of population have rendered the exercise of their powers inexpedient.

The industry is naturally a very ancient one, and in the civic records we find various references to farriery and regulations with regard to it. We read of one Walter de Brun, farrier in the Strand, in the time of Edward I., who had a forge in the parish of St Clement on the peculiar tenure of paying to the king six horse-shoes. The prices of shoes, etc.,

## THE FARRIERS' COMPANY

were all subject to fixed regulations ; but these matters relate not to the Company, but rather to the trade with which they are associated.

The Company has one small charity to administer, viz., the Soules' bequest, made in 1572, by which the donor gave property to the parish of St Sepulchre, London, on condition that the churchwardens pay annually 13s. 4d. to the Farriers' Company for the benefit of their poor. Their total income is £72 per annum.

It is with much pleasure that we have to record the most useful work of this Company in modern times, and the noble efforts that they are now making on behalf of the most useful animal that man possesses—the horse. In 1876 they began by inviting essays on the horse and horse-shoeing, but no great results were obtained. A prize was offered for a set of shoes most suitable for the London streets, for macadam, stone, asphalte, and wood roadways, regard being especially paid to slipperiness arising from damp, etc. It would have been satisfactory if some of the competitors could have solved this difficulty.

In 1890 they took measures of great public utility by devising an admirable system of examination and the national registration of shoeing smiths. A powerful Committee was formed, composed of many distinguished men, and at the present time there are no less than 5000 smiths who are entitled to use the mystic letters R.S.S. after their names, and to whom any one may with confidence trust the most valuable horse. Those who have suffered from the disastrous consequences of having their horses injured and lamed by defective shoeing will sympathise much with this movement, and owe a great debt of gratitude to the Farriers' Company for their energetic and praiseworthy action for the public benefit.

The whole of England and Wales is included in this scheme, and recently Scotland too has been added to the area over which this beneficent Company extend their influence. Though one of the poorest of the City Companies, the Farriers have been instrumental in the adoption of a programme of which the very richest might be proud. In these latter days of the nineteenth century it is given to few City Guilds to

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exercise a national influence. This has been accomplished by the Farriers' Company, and they have earned by their perseverance and enterprise the gratitude of all.

### X X I I

#### THE FELTMAKERS' COMPANY

THIS Company was originally united to the Haberdashers, and was separately incorporated by James I. in 1604 for the purpose of regulating the manufacture and sale of felt hats. Feltmaking is a very ancient industry, and St Clement, the old patron saint of the guild, was the supposed originator of the process.

We read of the existence of Feltmakers in England as early as the twelfth century, when, in 1180, one Richard Thedr, described as *Feltrarius*, was compelled to pay a fine to the Crown on account of his *adulterine* (*i.e.*, unlicensed) guild. Mention is made of the fraternity in 1501, when they ranked forty-seventh on the list of City Companies. Very early in his reign they obtained the favour of James I., who granted them a Charter. This document has unfortunately been lost, but subsequent Charters were given by Charles II. in 1667 and 1669 which recited and confirmed the previous one, and also an *inspeximus* Charter by George III.

Various causes have combined to injure the trade of the members of the Company and the prosperity of their corporation. About the time of the Restoration there was abundant need of their services, when fashions in dress reigned supreme, and at an earlier period the courtiers were resplendent in their felt hats and fur capes; but foreign competition, with which traders in these days are sadly too familiar, ruined the home industry. Foreign felt found its way, in spite of prohibitive laws, into English markets, and the introduction of furs by the Hudson Bay Company, founded in 1670, further crippled the revenues of the English Feltmakers. The Company have no relics of any interest, except four banners, an iron

## THE FLETCHERS' COMPANY

chest, a poor box, and a beadle's mace which is embellished with the representation of a hat.

The income of the Company is very small—under £400—which includes two trusts, one founded in 1692 by Philip Macham for the benefit of twenty-five decayed master feltmakers or members of the Felt-makers' Company, and the other founded by Thomas King in 1804 for the relief of six widows of master feltmakers and six poor masters, who receive respectively £5 and £2 each. The resources of the Company do not allow them to engage in any important beneficent schemes, but some years ago they offered prizes for essays and specimens of the manufacture of felt in order to improve the industry with which the Company has been so long associated.

### X X I V

#### THE FLETCHERS' COMPANY

POSSIBLY the name of this Company may not convey any definite idea to the minds of our readers as to the particular art or craft practised by its members. The Fletchers were arrow-makers, and naturally their industry was anciently very important. In accordance with the usual custom of subdividing labour in the Middle Ages, the Fletchers were quite distinct from the Bowyers, or makers of bows ; and also in accordance with the usual practice of closely allied traders, few people quarrelled more than the representatives of the two Companies. At one time the Company must have been a flourishing institution, but its glory has passed away with the advent of more deadly weapons. A grant of arms was bestowed on the Company as early as the reign of Edward IV., and in the time of Henry VII. a crest was added. "True and Sure" is their motto, well earned by the archers of England and the Fletchers in the days when the arrows of our English bowmen did such brave execution on the fields of Crecy and Poictiers. Previous to the reign of Henry VII. they had a livery, and ranked thirty-ninth among the City Companies of London.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

But all relics of their former greatness have passed away. Their Charter is lost or destroyed. Fire has probably deprived them of all their documents, and they have no entry in their books earlier than 1775. Other records tell us of the constant disputes with the Bowyers, and of a decision in the matter as early as 1371. They had the rights of search with respect to all manner of arrows, arrow-heads, and quarrels, and were prevented by a wise regulation from selling their goods to foreigners unless with the sanction of the king or his advisers. At one time they had a hall in Aldgate Ward, which is referred to by Stow as being then in the occupation of one John Holding, and the land upon which it stood, now occupied by a warehouse (No. 46 St Mary Axe), is still in the possession of the Company. The income of the Company only amounts to about £100, and they have no trust funds. It is much to be regretted that time has dealt so hardly with the records of this Company, which at one time must have been an important one.

### X X V

#### THE FOUNDERS' COMPANY

THIS Company has been fortunate enough to find its historian : the late Mr W. M. Williams, who was Master of the Company in 1852-4, wrote a volume entitled *Annals of the Worshipful Company of Founders* (1868), which contains a full and graphic description of its distinguished career. As early as 1365 a mystery of Founders existed, with masters elected and sworn to govern it. This is evident from the existence of a petition in Norman French, preserved in the Letter-books at Guildhall, from "the good men of the Mystery of the Founders of the City of London," praying for a grant of ordinances for the regulation of the craft. Their jurisdiction extended over the manufacture of candlesticks, buckles, spurs, stirrups, straps, lavers, pots, ewers, and basins, made of brass, latten, or pewter.

## THE FOUNDERS' COMPANY

In 1472 there seems to have been some kind of reconstitution of the Guild. An old document mentions incidentally that "we began in the year 1472 with twenty-four poor honest men." This doubtless marks the transition of the original guild to some more settled form of incorporation. The ordinances of 1489 contain directions about masses, burials, alms, etc. The carrying wares to fairs, hawking them, restricting the workmanship to members of the craft, alms paid to members, funerals of members (there was a hearse-cloth for common use, which was destroyed during the Commonwealth times as Popish), and apprenticeships seem to have been the matters which principally occupied the attention of the guild at this period. The control of apprentices seems always to have been rather a difficult task. They loved riots and sport, and one of the ordinances in 1608 prohibited the playing of bowls, betting at cards, dice, tables, and shovel-board. In 1531 the Company bought the site of their old hall in Founders' Hall Court, which property remains to the present time in their possession. A grant of arms was made to them in 1590—a ewer with two candlesticks, with the motto, "God the only Founder." The first Charter was granted in 1614 by James I., which gave to the Company its present constitution and privileges. One of the principal duties was the approving and sizing of all brass weights within the City, which were ordered to be brought to Founders' Hall, and there "sized and made lawful and good according to our standard of England," and then marked with the common mark of the mystery, "being the form of a ewer," the Company taking the ancient allowance for sizing. This was a very important public trust. Lothbury was the centre of the trade of the Founders, around the church of St Margaret, wherein they performed their religious offices, and in a chapel of which (St Clement's) was placed their common chest. This chest was fortunately preserved during the Great Fire.

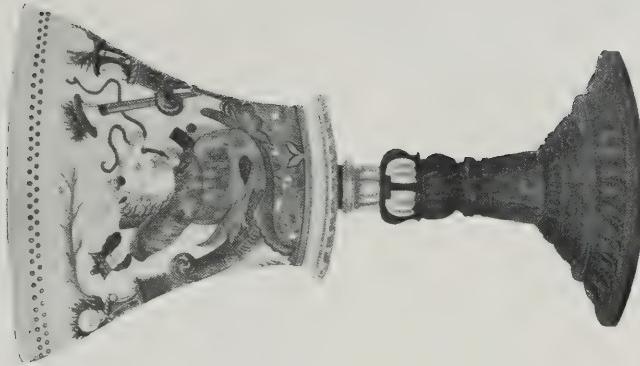
Stow tells us that Lothbury "was possessed for the most part by Founders that cast candlesticks, chafing dishes, spice mortars, and such like copper or laton works, and do afterwards turn them with the foot,

## THE CITY COMPANIES

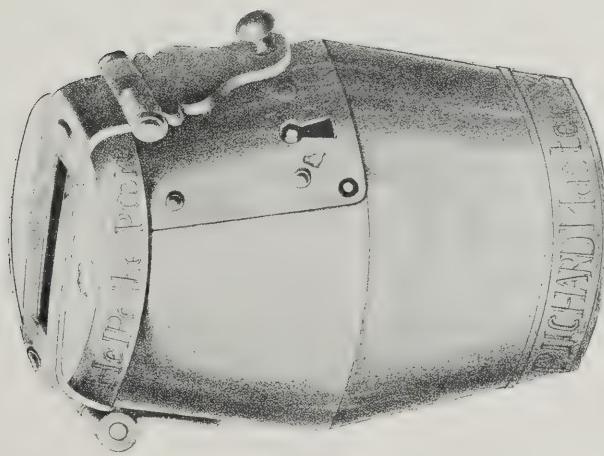
and not with the wheel, to make them smooth and bright with turning and scrating (as some do term it), making a loathsome noise to the by-passers that have not been used to the like, and therefore disdainfully called Lothberie. Next is Founders' Hall, a proper house." This fantastic derivation is, of course, absurd ; and Maitland is nearer the truth when he says that probably its original name was Latenbury, alluding to the dealers and workers of tin or latten dwelling there. The Merchant Adventurers, the Eastland Merchants who traded in the Baltic, the East India Merchants and the Brown Bakers' Company rented the hall in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and later on the Gunmakers, Loriners, and Clockmakers, and the S.P.C.K. It was also let for preaching and dancing. The earliest Scots' Church in London held service here from 1672 to 1764.

The annals of the Company tell of many events in civic history. When Queen Elizabeth rode to St Paul's Cathedral after the defeat of the Spanish Armada the Founders attended in their stand, covered with fair blue cloth, and gay whifflers in coats of velvet and chains. They took part in the Irish Plantation scheme of James I. They were oppressed by divers forced loans, and on one occasion in the time of Charles I. the wardens were sent to prison for not contributing their share. During the Civil War gunpowder was stored in the hall. They joyfully placed the King's Arms in their hall at the Restoration, though the return of the Stuarts brought them no little misfortune, as the King seized their Charter and they had to pay large sums for a re-grant.

The records of the Company are full of interesting details. They reveal sometimes great variance and discord when perverse persons of the fellowship quarrelled with the governing body and said divers and hard words concerning the wardens and liverymen. In 1508 they disputed about the custody of the plate, "napyre," or table linen, and jewels belonging to the craft. We find them fighting again in 1652, when certain "false complainers, according to their perverse, proud and peevish minds," accused the governing body of arbitrary conduct.



LOVING CUP  
Venetian painted glass of the fifteenth century, said to have been brought from Boulogne when that place was besieged and taken by the English in 1444. The stem is of silver gilt; the original glass foot having been broken, it is supposed, during the siege. In the possession of the Founders' Company



POOR BOX  
Copper Box for holding the money given for distribution every Christmas, presented by Mr. Steven Pitchard, Upper Ward, 1653. In the possession of the Founders' Company



## THE FOUNDERS' COMPANY

The oldest book of the Company begins with an inventory of the possessions of the craft of Founders in 1497, which shows a goodly treasure of valuable plate, including eight masers "with a boss," standing cups and spoons, a table for an altar, with an image of St Clement, and much "napyre." The "beryin lycht at Sen Margetes in Lodbury" was provided by the Company before the Reformation, the Wax Chandler being paid for supplying the wax. In Mary's time the Mass was resumed and the priest was paid for singing it xvid. The Founders frequently attended the preaching at Paul's Cross, and in 1587 paid xiid. for "hiar of forms" or seats. At one time it is probable that they had the privilege, together with the Vintners and Dyers, of keeping swans on the Thames; at any rate they went swan upping and had pyes baked for their refreshments in 1598, but in the next year they sold their swans. The forced loans required by James I. compelled them to sell some of their plate; in 1617 forty-eight spounes, silver-gilt, were sold, and twenty-five in 1620. The destruction of the old hearse-cloth, "embroydered with gould and Popish images, being contrary to a late ordinance of Parliament," is recorded in 1645, when it was ordered to be burned by Mr Major, and at the same time some tapestry described as "old Popish-painted cloth" was taken away and "other new put in the room." There are allusions to the "late dreadful fire in London which wholly consumed the hall, and many of the books, movables and papers; but they must have soon rebuilt it as in 1671 the Company had a breakfast in the hall on Lord Mayor's Day. The great frost of 1684 is mentioned when, on January 17, "the Master and Upper Warden played ninepins on the Thames, and a coach and horses came trotting over the middle of the Thames upon the ice." The five hundredth anniversary of the Company was observed in 1865, when a great banquet was held at the Crystal Palace.

For a long period of its existence the wealth of the Company does not appear to have been great. Their hall was burnt in 1666 and rebuilt by voluntary subscriptions. In 1846 the finances of the Company began to improve. They let their old hall and the property adjoining and purchased

## THE CITY COMPANIES

a new home in St Swithin's Lane, where stands the present hall. Of late years a considerable accession of gentlemen has been made to the Livery. They subscribe to the Brass Founders' and Metal Workers' Charitable Institution. Their trust fund of £115 is mainly for the relief of poor founders. Henry Jordelyn in 1468 left lands to the Fishmongers' Company for certain charities, and desired that twenty of the poor householders of the Craft of Founders should receive a quarter of coals each. In accordance with this ancient will the Fishmongers pay to the Founders 13s. 4d. annually for the poor. Other benefactors are John Relye (1638), Abraham Woodhall (1640), King (1802), and William Bond (1824), and many others who have given to the Company plate and other treasures. The Company have recently offered prizes for specimens of the founder's art, and for essays on the history and art of founding in brass, copper, and bronze, and thus continue to promote the welfare of their own craft and the public good.

The Founders possess some ancient plate, a spoon, the gift of Humphrey Bowin in 1625, which bears this inscription,—

“ If you love me—keep me ever,  
That's my desire—and your endeavour,”

and three tankards presented by Thomas Fisher in 1708. They have two masers of very ancient date, a Venetian glass of the sixteenth century called “ Wioley's Cup,” brought from Boulogne when Henry VIII. captured that place, the cup being part of the pillage, and a copper treasure chest given by Stephen Pilchard in 1653 which bears the motto, “ Helpe the Poore.” The search and view of work in brass and copper have long been abandoned, but the sizing and stamping or marking of brass weights continues and has vastly increased. About 20,000 weights are stamped every year at the hall, and this useful part of the Company's work prevents much fraud and deceit in trade and confers a great benefit on the community.

# THE FRAMEWORK KNITTERS' COMPANY

## X X V I

### THE FRAMEWORK KNITTERS' COMPANY

THE Company of Framework Knitters, the sixty-fifth in order of precedence amongst the municipal guilds of London, owes its origin to the invention of the stocking loom. Stow, in his *Chronicle*, says :—“In the year 1599 was devised and perfected the art of knitting or weaving silk stockings, waistcoats, and divers other things by engines or steel looms, by William Lee, Master of Arts at St John's College, Cambridge, and after that he went into France, where he obtained a patent of the King.”

Romance has woven many pretty legends concerning the life of the inventor, and tells of his expulsion from Cambridge on account of an imprudent marriage, and of his living upon what his wife earned by knitting stockings. Elmore's painting of the “Origin of the Stocking-loom” represents the young inventor watching her knitting, and first conceiving the idea of the machine. Such stories are mythical. He was living as a bachelor curate of Calverton when he commenced his work, and perfected it in 1589. He then removed to London, and established his new industry at Bunhillfields, St Luke's, whence its use radiated to Spitalfields and Godalming. The Spanish Armada had just been defeated, and the nation was wild with delight. Lord Hunsdon secured for him an audience with Queen Elizabeth, who visited his lodgings, and admired the invention, but was disappointed because it would not knit silk hose. She refused a patent, because she feared it would deprive many poor people of their industry. Lee then adapted his machine for the making of silk stockings, and presented a pair to the Queen, who admired them very much, but still refused either patents, privilege, or money. With James I. he fared no better, and discouraged and disappointed he accepted the invitation of Henry IV., King of France, settled at Rouen, was called to the Court, presented to the King, and would have doubtless risen to good fortune when the assassination of Henry IV. by Ravaillac destroyed his

## THE CITY COMPANIES

hopes of royal favour. He died at Paris of a broken heart in 1610. His portrait once adorned the Company's hall, but it has disappeared. Most probably the figure of the cleric, which appears as a supporter in the Company's arms, is intended to represent the great inventor. His monument is best seen in the busy hives of industry at Nottingham, Leicester, and numerous French cities which owe their prosperity to him.

The industry thrrove rapidly after Lee's death. Frames and workmen increased greatly both in London, Godalming and Nottinghamshire. The framework knitters formed themselves into an association or guild in order to protect and regulate the trade. They were troubled with many annoyances. One Pichard defied their authority, and sold fraudulent or underfashioned goods: an apprentice returned to Venice with the Ambassador and tried to start the trade there; one Abraham Jones set up looms at Amsterdam, but providentially (as they thought) was killed by a plague. Hence about half a century after the death of the inventor the Company of Framework Knitters, or Stocking Weavers, as they were sometimes called, was formed and incorporated by Oliver Cromwell in 1657. In the petition for the Charter it is stated "that the trade of framework knitting was never known or practised here in England, or in any other place in the world before it was (about fifty years past) invented and found out by one William Lee, of Calverton, in the County of Nottingham, gentleman, who, by himself and such of his kindred and countrymen as he took unto him for servants, practised the same many years, somewhat imperfectly in comparison of the exactness it is sithense brought into by the endeavours of some of your petitioners."

On the restoration of Charles II. the Company applied for and obtained a new Charter in 1663. Under its provisions officers of the Company made search for stockings badly made or of deceitful stuff, and cut in pieces the offending garments. The invention "being purely English," no frames were allowed to be exported beyond the seas, and other protective regulations strictly enjoined. For some time the Company appears to have prospered. They had a large income, and

## THE FRAMEWORK KNITTERS' COMPANY

indulged in expensive pomp and pageantries. The master had a carriage, beadles and attendants were resplendent in gold lace liveries, and the Company gloried in the possession of a gilded barge, a large band of musicians, and in banners emblazoned with their arms. In 1678 they purchased a site in Red Cross Street for the erection of a hall, which was soon afterwards built, and in 1713 the Court of Aldermen granted a livery. They had a grant of arms, which consists of a stocking frame with supporters, a cleric in collegiate gown and cap, probably a likeness of William Lee, the inventor, and a female figure with knitting needles.

The members of the Company, however, suffered greatly from the competition of traders in the Midlands, over whom they in vain sought to exercise control. The authority of the Company was disputed, and finally the question was brought before Parliament in 1753, when they were deprived of their jurisdiction, and from that time have ceased to exercise any real authority over the trade. In 1720 they propounded a curious scheme for the creation of a great trading company which should defy all competition. The sum of £10,000, the accumulation of their surplus funds, formed the nucleus of the scheme, which ended in failure and the loss of their wealth. The Company was greatly impoverished, and for this cause strove to exact fees and contributions from the workers at Nottingham and Leicester. They sent their officers to the former town, who had quarters at the Feathers' Tavern, levying fines, and admitting to the freedom of the Company. This action was resisted, the results of which I have already stated. The Company forsook their hall after 1732, and probably let it, their plate and pictures being removed to some tavern. In 1745 the courts were held at the White Hart Tavern, Bishopsgate. In 1755 a bond for securing their plate and other goods was entered into by the landlord of the Dog Tavern, Garlic Hill. In 1759 the hall was leased to Mr Seward, a brewer, and two years later the Company removed their plate, banners and furniture to the Ship Tavern, Threadneedle Street, which remained their home for many years. A short time afterwards they were in financial difficulties, and Mr Robinson,

## THE CITY COMPANIES

of Threadneedle Street, advanced money, taking as security some of their pictures, and amongst them the portrait of the inventor, which has now disappeared, and is probably in some private collection. Bad trade and the competition of the Midlands, rioting and frame-breaking, which was carried on by the Luddites, added difficulties to the London traders and the Company. In 1821 the hall was sold, and with the abandonment of the special privileges which the Company enjoyed, their connection with the trades and their influence declined. They have four charities for the support of twelve almshouses in Kingsland Road, in the parish of St Leonard, Shoreditch. In 1861 they sold their plate and realised £80 for the repair of the almshouses. The income of the Company from all sources is about £400, of which £130 is trust property, and their expenditure is about £350. They possess an interesting relic of their ancient state in a Master's Chair presented to the Company in 1618.

### XXVII

#### THE FRUITERERS' COMPANY

THIS is a very active Corporation, which has grafted modern ideas and developments upon an ancient stock. We hear of its existence in 1515, when it occupied the position of forty-eighth on the list of the City Companies. It was incorporated by James I. "for the better order, government, and rule" of the Company, and had the title of "The Master, Wardens, and Commonalty of the Mystery of Fruiterers of London." Some old customs exist in connection with this Company. Every year, usually in the month of October, they present to the Lord Mayor an offering of English grown fruit, in memory of the ancient right of the Corporation to a toll in kind on all produce brought into the City.

They have no hall, and generally hold their meetings at the Guildhall. Their annual banquet takes place on St Paul's Day, on which occasion a

## THE GIRDLERS' COMPANY

small sum is divided amongst the "first-comers," as a reward for their punctuality. Their income is small, and is derived principally from the payments of the members of the Company. Their only property consists of some bank stock and a share of the Ulster Plantation, which together yield about £100 a year.

They have for some years endeavoured to promote and assist the cultivation of home-grown fruit by cottagers and other small holders of land, and have given prizes at various shows and exhibitions. They have in addition given prizes for essays on fruit growing, and on packing and selling fruits and vegetables ; and these essays, which are of much practical utility, have been published at a price to cover the cost of their production.<sup>1</sup> This very excellent work the Company have undertaken in the hope that their efforts will tend to assist in the improvement of the deplorable condition of English agriculture, and enable our villagers to increase their scanty wages.

## X X V I I I

### THE GIRDLERS' COMPANY

AT a recent gathering of the members of this Company the claim was advanced that this Company was one of the most ancient in the City of London. This may have been so, and, inasmuch as their trade existed even in Anglo-Saxon times, they have some reason for their belief. Before the days of pockets the girdle was an important part of a person's costume. On it were suspended such important articles as keys, ink-horns, purses or books. It has been made the symbol of investiture or renunciation, and so essential was it that people pledged their word in such sayings as, "May my girdle break if I fail!" Girdles of silk, or

<sup>1</sup> The essays are, *Profitable Fruit Growing*, by Mr John Wright, and *Packing and Selling Fruit and Vegetables*, by Mr Lewis Castle. They are published by Messrs Collingridge, Aldersgate Street, E.C., and the price of each is 1s. retail.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

wool, or linen, adorned the lady's waist, and garters too came within the province of the Girdlers' trade. It is believed to have been a fraternity by prescription, which owed its origin to a lay brotherhood of the Order of St Lawrence, maintaining themselves by the making of girdles, and associated together for the purpose of mutual protection and the advancement of their industry. Three gridirons which appear on the arms of the Company show their connection with their tutelary saint. The earliest public recognition of the Company, of which they now possess any evidence, consists of letters patent of the first year of King Edward III., A.D. 1327, addressed to them as an existing body, as "Les beincturiers de notre Citée de Loundres," by which the ancient "ordinances and usages" of the trade are approved and their observances directed. In 1376 they appeared among the City Guilds as "Zonars." The Company was incorporated by King Henry VI. in 1448, and subsequent Charters were granted, but no important change in their original constitution was made by any of the Charters prior to that of Elizabeth, which directs that the three arts or mysteries called Pinners, Wyerworkers, and Girdlers should be joined into one body corporate, under the title of the Master, Wardens, or Keepers of the Art and Mystery of Girdlers.

The early records of the Company's transactions were destroyed with their hall by the Great Fire, but they have minute books commencing in the year 1622 and extending to the present time. The disuse of the girdle, which was formerly an important article of costume, has made the trade obsolete for two centuries. The girdle scarcely survived the reign of Charles II. Thomas Sutton, the founder of the Charterhouse, was the Company's most distinguished member.<sup>1</sup> They have frequently been enriched by the bequests of pious benefactors, the most valuable of which is the site of their hall in Basinghall Street, granted to them by Andrew Hunt in 1431. Under his will they were obliged to perform

<sup>1</sup> Recent researches leave some room for doubt whether Thomas Sutton was ever a member of the Girdlers' Company.

## THE GLASS-SELLERS' COMPANY

masses for the soul of the benefactor in the church of St Lawrence, to offer five wax candles before the image of the saint, and to provide lodgings for two decayed members of the brotherhood.

The hall was repaired and the offices rebuilt at a large cost in 1887. Some of their lands are in the City and at Hammersmith, and have therefore much increased in value. The total income of the Company is £4300, of which £1300 is trust property. They have two sets of almshouses, founded by George Palyn and Cuthbert Beeston; they support pensioners, and give bequests to the poor of certain parishes. Having now erected their hall, which entailed upon them many sacrifices, they have been able to benefit mankind by the useful application of the wealth of which, happily, they have in recent times become possessors. They have set aside the sum of £100 a year for the purpose of promoting technical education, and are now devising a scheme for the most advantageous application of their wealth, whereby they hope to benefit largely the cause which they have in view.

A curious custom prevailed at the election of the Master. A crown was brought in and placed on the head of several members of the Company. The opinion of the members was sought as to whether the crown fitted the heads on which it was tried, and they declared "no fit," until at length it was placed on the head of the Master elect, when the Company all pronounced it to be a "good fit," and the Master was duly elected. At the present day the Master and Wardens are crowned, but the full detail of the ancient ritual is not carried out.

### X X I X

#### THE GLASS-SELLERS' COMPANY

THE income of this Company is very small, and only consists of a scholarship fund of £50 a year, founded in 1875 by John Abbott, Esq., Master of the Company in that year, in honour of the Rev. Dr Abbott,

## THE CITY COMPANIES

head master of the City of London School, for the support of a student proceeding from the City of London School to the Universities, and a small trust of £21 a year left by John Hayes for poor members of the Company. The only other source of income is the subscriptions of the existing members. But, in spite of its modest endowment, the Company has an interesting history, and possesses several valuable and lengthy documents and Charters which tell the story of its past. The Association existed in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, who received a petition from them against the encroachments of a certain Venetian glass manufacturer who had established himself in the hall of the disused monastery of the Crutched Friars. Their Charter was granted to them by Charles II., and is a very lengthy document. It refers to the humble petition of "our well-beloved subjects the glass-sellers and looking-glass makers," and grants them right of search into all places "where glasses, looking-glasses, hour-glasses, and stone pots or bottles shall be made, kept, showed, or put to sale," etc. A certain Master Thomas Tilson, of London, merchant, who made crystal glasses and looking-glass plates as well, or better, than any that came from Venice, was not to be interfered with by the newly-incorporated body.

In 1710 there was a revival of the Company, and establishment of the livery, and a document states the glass manufactory had of late years much improved, especially in flint and looking-glasses, and that the Company had much increased in the number and quality of the members thereof. But the Corporation never became a well-endowed body, although its members were worthy and distinguished men. The bye-laws are interesting and very full. We notice that an unruly apprentice, if he should be a drunkard, haunter of taverns, alehouses, bowling alleys, or other lewd or suspected places of evil company, gamester, dicer, or runner away, should be brought to the hall, stripped and whipped by persons appointed for that purpose. The Company have done great service to the art with which they are connected, and also organised in 1875 an exhibition of glass at the Alexandra Palace, at which prizes were awarded at a cost of nearly £500.

## THE GLAZIERS' COMPANY

XXX

### THE GLAZIERS' COMPANY

LIKE its predecessors, this Company is also a small one. Its income only amounts to £300, of which £40 is trust property. This latter amount is made up of the Abraham Wall's Charity for aged poor women of the Company, Robert Taynton's Charity, John Oliver's Charity, and the Vollett and Knight's Charity, all for the benefit of decayed glaziers. They can date their existence prior to the time of Charles I., who granted them their first Charter. This document states that the ancient fraternity of the mystery or art of glaziers, London, had hitherto made many good orders for the regulating themselves and their trade, which had, from time to time, been improved and enlarged in the reigns of several princes. The prayer of the petitioners was therefore granted, and the Company became incorporated. This Charter appears to have been surrendered in the reign of James II., and a new Charter was granted, which arranges for the election of a Master, two Wardens, and eighteen or more assistants, and obliges them to be members of the Church of England and to have received the Sacrament.

The history of the glaziers' art, its rapid progress from the time when the windows of the great City halls were devoid of glass and open to the weather, would require too large a space. Nor do the annals of the Company present many features of interest. Its sole possessions are the corporate seal, the beadle's staff and the Master's jewel, with the exception of the arms of the Company, some banners (which have for many years "borne the breeze," if not the battle), and a table-cover bearing the date, 1646. The income of the Company is mainly derived from fees paid for admission and to the interest derived from the proceeds of the sale of their real estate in Thames Street and Queen Street which was purchased by the Company in 1671 for £490.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

### XXXI

#### THE GLOVERS' COMPANY

THE constant use of gloves during the Middle Ages and in subsequent periods by the gentry of England must have made the trade a lucrative one. Kings wore them when they were crowned. They were the insignia of royalty, and were usually jewelled on the back of the hand. Bishops wore gloves worked with gold, and were usually buried with them. The sport of hawking necessitated the extensive use of gloves, and when fair ladies played at archery they protected their hands with these coverings. Henry VIII. bought some pairs of "shooting gloves for Lady Ann." They were the instruments of challenge, gages of combat, lovers' gifts and ladies' favours. Perfumed gloves were the delight of Stuart dames, and for centuries they have played their part in our social life. The makers of them must therefore have been numerous, and their work remunerative. Not only in London did they flourish. The Glovers of Perth claimed to have had a corporate existence in 1165, and the town still possesses many relics of their ancient calling. The Glovers of Chester took part with other guilds in the miracle plays in 1327. In London we find that the guild existed as early as 1349, when a set of Ordinances was framed. A few years later we find them contributing to the cost of the French war and receiving a grant of arms; and in 1351 they brought one John Francis to the Mayor for punishment for making false gloves to the scandal of the trade. Seventeen pairs of gloves and twenty-eight braels (belts) of false fashion and vamped up of false materials were ordered to be "burnt in the High Street of Chepe." In 1372 they contributed to the cost of the King's wars in France. In 1375 they pray the Mayor to prevent all trading on Sundays and great festivals. In 1483 they inaugurated a new fiscal policy by procuring the passing of an Act prohibiting the importation of gloves. Then their career became somewhat chequered. In 1498 they are united with the Pursers' Guild,

## THE GLOVERS' COMPANY

and the Glovers-Pursers take their rank of twenty-seventh place on the list of the Livery Companies. A few years later they are united with the Leathersellers, and the three combined guilds frequent the Chapel of St Thomas of Acon in Cheapside, so closely associated with the Mercers' Company. There they offered their accustomed offerings and attended the services of the Church. But the trade of the Glovers prospered and they desired to recover their lost independence. This they gained from King Charles I. in 1638, when a new Charter was granted to "The Master, Wardens and Fellowship of the Company of Glovers of the City of London." The preamble states that there were 400 families engaged in the trade, who were much impoverished by the confluence of persons of the same art, a disordered multitude, working in chambers and corners, and making naughty and deceitful gloves. Wherefore the Charter gave the Company power to search and destroy all bad wares. Under the bye-laws of 1680 women were allowed to be members of the Company. The old hall stood in Beech Lane, but that has long been lost, and of the later history of the Company little is known. They possess some invested funds and very valuable old plate. There are eighty-one names on the list of the Livery. The history of the trade apart from that of the Company and the various changes in fashions present many features of interest. Their total income is £152, of which £48 is trust property, which is for the benefit of decayed members of the Company.

More than half a century before their amalgamation with the Leathersellers' Company, the Glovers' Company had obtained a grant of arms from John Smart, Garter King-of-Arms, which is dated 14th October 1464. The original grant was in French, but a translation of it appears on a scroll of arms (3 feet long and 1½ feet wide, with the arms painted thereon) in the possession of the Leathersellers' Company. The arms figured on this scroll and in the Vincent MS. in the Heralds' College are those still in use by the Glovers' Company, viz. :—

*Arms*—Per fess sable and argent, a pale countercharged, three rams salient proper, armed and inguled or.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

*Crest*—A ram's head proper, armed and issuing from a basket or filled with wool proper, between two angels' wings erect gules.

*Wreath*—Argent and sable.

*Mantle*—Ermine and gules.

During the period (from 1505 onwards) that the Glovers were amalgamated with the Leathersellers, the latter Company used a coat-of-arms in which the coat of the Glovers' Company (three rams) was quartered with the Pursters' (two goats), and impaled with the Leather-sellers' arms (three roebucks); but subsequently, after the Glovers' Company was re-incorporated by Charter from King Charles I. on 10th September 1638, the Leathersellers resumed (19th August 1687) their old arms, retaining, however, the Glovers' ram as the sinister supporter.

The Charter of Charles I. to the Glovers' Company was, on the 21st March 1698, "ratified and confirmed" by Her late Majesty Queen Victoria by an *inspeximus* Charter, in which Her Majesty, "holding good and acceptable for Us, Our Heirs and successors, so much as in Us lies," accepted and approved the Charter of 1638. The Glovers' Company is the only city guild which received an *inspeximus* Charter during the long reign of Queen Victoria.

### XXXII

#### THE GOLD AND SILVER WYRE DRAWERS' COMPANY

MR HORACE STEWART has written a history of this Company, which has had a chequered career, at one time being almost defunct, but now flourishing with all the energy of youth. In Exodus (xxxix. 1-3) we read of the making of the ephod of gold, and how they beat the gold into thin plates and cut it into wires to work it in the fine linen with cunning work. The use of gold wire can be traced through the Egyptians, the Greeks and Romans, to the Anglo-Saxons; but the

## GOLD & SILVER WYRE DRAWERS' COMPANY

German towns of Nuremberg and Augsburg introduced the method of wire-drawing.

Very rich and costly was the embroidery of the Middle Ages, and the Venetian, Florentine and Genoese merchants threw on the vanity of our ancestors, and men and women vied with each other in making themselves, their pages, and their horse-gear resplendent with gold and finery. The Guild of Gold and Silver Wyre Drawers is ancient, and was at various times united with the Pinners, Chape-makers, and the Girdlers. The first mention of it occurs in the reign of Edward IV. (1461). James I. granted them a Charter, but afterwards withdrew it, and it was not until 1693 that William and Mary incorporated them "as one body, corporate and politic in deed, fact, and name, with the title of Master, Wardens, Assistants, and Commonalty of the Art and Mystery of drawing and plattting of gold and silver thread and stiffe in our City of London." Nathaniel Smith was their first Master, and meetings were held in Plasterers' Hall, in Addle Street. They framed laws and regulations for the government of the Company. One bye-law ordered that each year three stewards should be elected, who should provide, at their own cost, two feasts and dinners, or pay a fine of £15. And lest the stewards should, from motives of economy, provide a bad dinner, the court arranged the menu, which in 1721 ran as follows:—"Three dishes of boiled fowls with oyster sauce and force-meat balls, turkeys and chines, geese with apple sauce, tongues, spinach, wild ducks, marrow puddings, apple pies, mince pies, and fruits."

Throughout the eighteenth century the Company performed much useful and earnest work, and battled gallantly against poverty and the malice of enemies. But fashions change, the old costly garments of our forefathers were abandoned, and gold and silver lace ceased to be used. Decay fell upon the Company, which almost ceased to exist.

The revival dates from the year 1879, when the energy of Mr Wynne E. Baxter rescued the Company from its forlorn condition, and started it upon a career of prosperity. It is not a rich guild, but many leading

## THE CITY COMPANIES

gentlemen of the City belong to it, and have raised it again to prominence. In technical education they have done good work. At the Royal Military Exhibition at Chelsea they displayed specimens of their work, and have set aside £105 for apprenticing boys and girls to the business of gold and silver wire-drawing. On one occasion they abandoned their annual banquet rather than cripple their expenditure on technical education. We heartily echo Mr Stewart's expression of hope that "the Worshipful Company of Gold and Silver Wyre Drawers, having, like the phoenix of old, risen rejuvenated from its ashes, may enjoy an equally long career of renewed prosperity and usefulness; and that its present and future members, wisely adapting themselves to the altered circumstances of the times, may find, not only within the limits of the trade which the Company represents, but also in those larger questions affecting the general welfare, fresh scope for their energies and a wider field in which to labour for the public good."

### X X X I I

#### THE GUNMAKERS' COMPANY

THIS Company still actively carries on the duties for which it was founded, and modern legislation has in no way interfered with its rights and privileges. It was founded in the reign of Charles I., in 1637, and the Charter recites "that divers blacksmiths and others inexpert in the art of gunmaking had taken upon them to make, try, and prove guns after their unskilful way, whereby the trade was not only damnified, but much harm and danger through such unskilfulness had happened to His Majesty's subjects." The Charter was therefore granted, and the Company ever since that time has performed its useful work of protecting our countrymen from the dangers of defective guns. All makers of guns and pistols were required to bring their weapons to be stamped by the

## THE GUNMAKERS' COMPANY

Company. The Gunmakers of London were declared to be the most expert in His Majesty's kingdom in that art, and Henry Rowland, gun-maker, is named as the first Master. The Charter tells of the great deceits and abuses practised by divers inexpert persons using the art of gunmaking, and of the import guns, dags and pistols unartificially made, and sold to the danger of English subjects. The Company were to break up and destroy all false handguns, dags and pistols, and to stamp the sound goods with the letters G P crowned. The Company was styled "The Master, Wardens and Society of the Mystery of Gunmakers in the City of London." Certain ordinances were subsequently made and confirmed by the Lord Keeper in 1670. These state that the Company may have a livery; allusion is made to the existence of Gunmakers' Hall; and minute regulations are laid down for the governing of the craft. A proving-house was established in Goodman's Fields, now situate on the south side of Commercial Road, Whitechapel, and on these premises the proving and marking of barrels of small-arms has ever since been carried on. When Birmingham became a seat of the industry by Act of Parliament in the time of George III., a proof-house was established there, and the powers of the Company were greatly enlarged. The "Gun Barrel Acts" of 1855 and 1868 further increased their power, and the high estimation in which the proof-marks of this Company are held by all gun manufacturers and the public, not only in this country, but in the colonies and elsewhere, can be pointed to as satisfactory evidence that the Company fulfils the objects and intentions of its foundation and incorporation. The income of this active Company, derived principally from the profits on the proving of guns, amounts to £2800, and they are in the habit of devoting sums to the building of churches, general education, and other good works.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

### X X X I V

#### THE HORNERS' COMPANY

AMONG the many mysteries which in the early history of our country held a corporate existence, that of horners, or buyers of horns and manufacturers of horn wares, is one of the most ancient. Henry III. granted a fair to Charlton, Kent, for three days, at the eve, the day, and the Morrow of the Trinity. The date of the fair was afterwards changed to St Luke's Day. This was called "horn fair" by reason of the great plenty of all sorts of winding horns and cups, and other vessels of horn, there bought and sold. In the reign of Edward III. the Horners ranked among the forty-eight mysteries of the City of London. Richard Baroun, horner, of London, in the time of Richard II., was an important person, whom the King retained to serve him with horns, and other things pertaining to his mystery, and to whom was granted the King's livery of clothing every year in the great wardrobe, as other horners of his condition had been wont to receive. By statute of Edward IV. it was enacted that from Easter 1466 no stranger (*i.e.* not a freeman of the Company) nor alien should buy any English horns unwrought of any tanner or other person within a radius of twenty-four miles of the city, and the price at which the horners should sell the goods was fixed. They could search for defective wares at the fairs of "Stirbridge and Elie." This Act was repealed in 1603, but the Horners presented a humble petition, stating that by reason of this repeal the Company had grown so poor and decayed, "as in a short time, if remedy be not provided, they and theirs shall be utterly undone," and caused the Act to be revived, except as regards the powers of search in Stourbridge and Ely fairs.

Charles I. prohibited the exportation of horns until the officers of the Company should first have made choice of the best for the supply of the realm, and in 1638 granted them a Charter, but the prosperity of the Com-

## THE INNHOLDERS' COMPANY

pany declined. The competition of the Pouchmakers and Leathersellers who dealt in the same wares tried them sorely; and the introduction and growing use of glass vessels instead of the old horn cups, which took place in the sixteenth century, contributed to the decay of the older craft. The only property they ever held was a warehouse in Wentworth Street, Whitechapel, which was leased to them in 1604 for 1000 years at a rental of £4 per annum. This was sold in 1881, and the proceeds, together with the fees, etc., yield an income of almost £100 a year. They petitioned for a livery in 1846, and the Court of Aldermen granted their request, the number of liverymen being limited to sixty. In spite of their limited resources the Horners promoted an Exhibition of Horn Work at the Mansion House some years ago, and succeeded in collecting a most interesting store of "works in horn ancient and modern," which attracted many visitors.

### X X X V

#### THE INNHOLDERS' COMPANY

THE inns and taverns of old London introduce us to a goodly company of wits and famous men who loved "to take their ease at an inn," and delight the world with their humour and smart sayings. We can seek with Isaac Walton "an honest alehouse where we shall find a cleanly room, lavender in the windows, and twenty ballads stuck about the wall, and a hostess, cleanly, handsome and civil," or go with Pepys to the Dolphin Tavern, and there meet "very able merchants of the City," or to the Cock Tavern where he ate a lobster and sang m mightily merry with Mrs Pierce and Mrs Knipp. Fancy may take us to the Devil Tavern in Fleet Street in company with Swift, and Garth, and Addison, and cause us to hear Dr Johnson invoking the Muses while he devoured "a magnificent hot apple-pye, stuck with bay-leaves," because Mrs Lennox had written verses. Or we may go to the Bell Savage and see the Flying Machine

## THE CITY COMPANIES

starting for Bath, or to the Bull and Gate in Aldersgate, whence at five o'clock in the morning the Exeter coach set out on its perilous journey, or watch an older pilgrimage still when from the Tabard Inn a not very austere company of travellers sallied forth on their pious journey to the shrine of St Thomas of Canterbury. The varied signs that swing over our heads invite our attention, and raise conjectures as to the origin of "The Lamb and Dolphin," "The Goose and Gridiron," "The Fox and Seven Stars;" Bulls bellow at us decked in black, red or white; lions also rage in blue, white and red attire. Swans wave their graceful "two necks"—a corruption of the two nicks, about which the swan-marker of the Vintners or Dyers could give us abundant information.

The Innholders' Company carry us back to the time when signs were less plentiful and the simple bush outside the tavern reminded the passers-by of the truth of the familiar proverb "Good wine needs no bush." In those days inns were not very numerous, as travellers found abundant hospitality in the guest-houses of the monasteries; but in the fourteenth century they began to multiply, and the *Liber Albus* gives very minute regulations with regard to their conduct. The Hosteler or Herbergeour might receive guests for a day and a night but for no longer time, if he be not willing to make answer for them. No one of ill repute might be harboured, and the hostiller must warn his guests that they must not carry arms, or wander about after curfew rung. The hostiller might not sell victuals, and charge only  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. for hay for one horse, a night and a day. Those who harboured foreign merchants were accustomed to warehouse their goods; but no one might harbour guests unless he was a freeman of the city. In order to protect their interests the Hostillers formed themselves into a fraternity, and this guild first appears on the scene in 1446, as we gather from a petition in the reign of Henry VI. presented by "the men of the Mystery of Hostillers of the City" before the Mayor, John Colney, praying for certain ordinances and rules for the management of the guild. In 1473 they seem to have been discontented with their name of Hostillers. They state that they were called "Hostillers," but were

## THE INNHOLDERS' COMPANY

really Innholders, and, inasmuch as they could not be distinguished from their servants, who were hostillers also, they prayed that they might in future bear the name of Innholders and in nowise "Hostillers." Henceforth the Hosteler was to be the servant of the Innholder—the hostler, or as in modern times the *ostler*. Henry VIII. granted them a Charter in 1514, in which the Company is described as the men of "the Art and Mystery of St Julian le Herbege of Innholders of the City of London." They were authorised to have a master and three wardens. St Julian was chosen as the Patron Saint of the Guild, for he made an inn or hospital by a river where men passed oft in great peril. Mr Philip Norman states that this Charter has an illuminated border, with the red rose of the house of Lancaster, the red and white rose of the Tudors, and the badge of Catherine of Aragon. "Within an initial H. is a miniature of the youthful King, and figures kneeling clad in blue-grey gowns edged with scarlet, while in the opposite corner is a figure of St Julian in armour, with cloak and cap." By a statute of 1663 every innholder was obliged to join the Company. In the same year the Company was dissolved and reconstituted by Royal Charter. The old fraternity was known as that of Innholders of St Julian le Herbege, and the new Company bore the title of the Master, Wardens, and Society of the Art and Mystery of Innholders of the City of London, and embraced all persons in the city, or within three miles of the same, who shall keep any inn, hostrie, petty hostel, or livery stable. James II. forced them to surrender their Charter, which was restored by William III. The Company began to prosper, and gifts and property increased, amongst which we may mention the valuable city lands in Coleman Street, Moorgate Street, Dowgate Hill, and in College Street (then called Elbow Lane) where their hall now stands. Their hall was destroyed in the Great Fire, and then rebuilt. This second hall was added to and improved by degrees and must have been a well-designed structure. Twenty-one years ago a very complete restoration took place, necessitated by the decay of the building. The dining hall was restored, and the rest

## THE CITY COMPANIES

of the building rebuilt in the old style with much taste and judicious care. The fine entrance bearing in the tympanum the arms of the Company, the old panelling, and some old glass are memorials of the old hall, and there are some very interesting portraits and pictures. Amongst them we notice that of Mr Charles Druce, great-grandfather of the present clerk, whose family has held that office for so long a period ; Sir Polydon de Keyser and Sir C. Marshall, Lord Mayors ; Dick Whittington listening to Bow Bells, and Charles II. driving away rebellion. The income of the Company is £2230, of which £230 are trust funds. These are for the benefit of poor folk.

Mrs Margaret Astill's gift in 1639 was for the preaching of a sermon annually to the Company at some church in the city appointed by the Master and Company. It does not appear how much the gift was, but it is stated that the Master and Company have not for many years past made any such appointment. We trust it is not because the Worshipful Company dislikes sermons. Amongst other benefactors are Thomas Bayley (1543), Thomas Hyne, Henry Scrambler (1845), Richard Bailey (1861), whose gifts are for the benefits of poor members of the fraternity. They have some good plate, amongst which may be mentioned two salt-cellars of the time of Elizabeth (1566), which are used at the Livery dinners to separate the Court and the Livery. Thus, an old custom, once in vogue in the baronial halls of the Middle Ages, is still preserved by this ancient Company. There is also a fine standing cup, the gift of Grace G. Walter in 1599, and a valuable collection of Apostle spoons.

### XXXVI

#### THE JOINERS' COMPANY

IN no work was the wonderful subdivision of labour so marked as in that which related to wood. Carpenters, joiners, sawyers, and planers,

## THE JOINERS' COMPANY

had each their own separate work and organisation, which were in no way to be trespassed upon or interfered with. It appears that the carpenter was the head of all these allied tradesfolk; he made the contract for the woodwork of the building to be erected; he reserved the roof for his own work, and employed the others as his subordinates. Cupboards, bedsteads, tables, chairs, fell within the province of the joiner, and "rayles, sealinge boards, wainscott clappboards, and bedd timber" were his raw materials. Sound and solid was his work, very different from the cheap and showy modern productions. Old chests and tables, the product of his skill, are still the delight of the *connoisseur*.

The Joiners' Guild was in existence as early as 1309, and indeed much earlier, as on that date they prayed that their old ordinances might be renewed. Queen Elizabeth granted them a Charter in 1570 under the title of "the Master, Wardens and Commonalty of the Faculty of Joiners and Ceilers or Carvers of London." No one was allowed to work at the trade in the city or suburbs unless he was admitted as a member of the Company. Ordinances were drawn up and approved by the Lord Keeper and Chief Justices for the governing of the craft. The Feast of St James the Apostle was fixed as the day for the election of Master and Wardens. Some additional bye-laws were drawn up and approved in 1605. Under these rules it was established that coachmakers, trunk-makers, boymakers, cupboardmakers, gunstockmakers and flaskmakers should be subject to the government of this Company. There was a great struggle and conflict in 1613 between the working joiners and other members of the Company with regard to the election of Master and Wardens. The former claimed that no one should be an officer unless he was a working joiner, and litigation arose, but the matter was settled according to ancient precedent, and the contention of craft-members was rejected.

The Companies of allied trades, such as the Carpenters, Gunmakers, Coachmakers were often in dispute with the Joiners' Company with regard to rights, privileges, monopolies and jurisdiction of their several crafts,

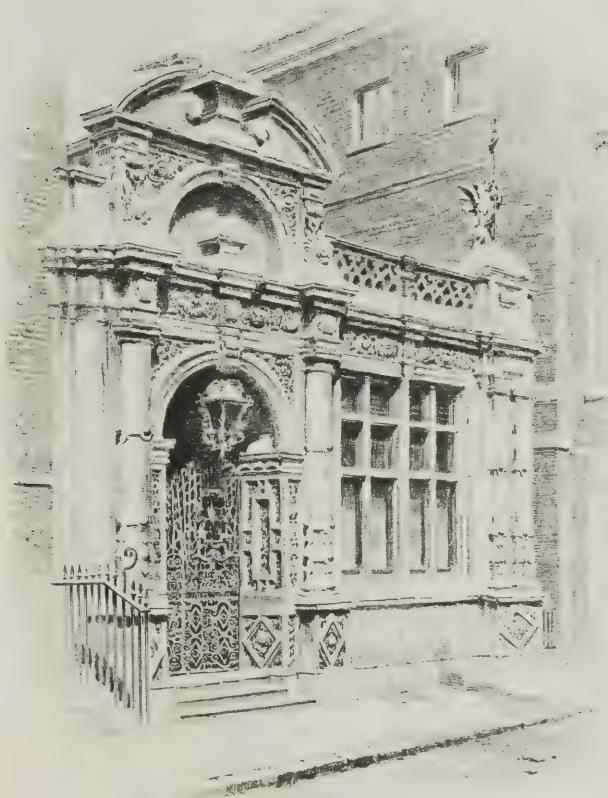
## THE CITY COMPANIES

but the abandonment of ancient powers and usages have caused these wounds to heal, and the Company now has very few persons of the trade on its list of members. They were induced to support the Irish Plantation Scheme of James I., and have a share of the estate at Magherafelt under the management of the Salters' Company. They have now an income of £1300, and no trust property. They give in pensions about £150 a year, and to various charities about £110. They offer prizes to various schools of art, and in other respects do what they can to benefit the trade. Their hall is in the Vintry, but all records are lost as to how the Company became possessed of the property. The carving of wood was one of the arts of the Joiners, and every one has admired the wonderful work of the famous Grinling Gibbons. But much of the skilful carving noticeable in the old Companies' halls is due to an earlier artist and joiner, Stephen College, who suffered death at Oxford on a charge of high treason in 1681. The Joiners still possess an old Master's chair and some plate.

### X X X V I I

#### THE LEATHERSELLERS' COMPANY

THIS is an active, flourishing, and distinguished guild, and is of ancient origin. They are first mentioned in 1372 in the reign of Edward III., when their *probi homines*, or *bonz gentz*, came upon the Court of Aldermen, together with those of the craft of Purzers (afterwards amalgamated with the Leathersellers' Company), and presented a petition desiring some stringent regulations to be made for the prevention of the sale of other than genuine leather, and to prevent fraudulent colouring of leather. It appears that such orders were necessary, as deceitful wares were as well-known then as they are now, and artificers were in the habit of scraping the leather of sheep and staining it, so as to produce the appearance of the leather of roe. The request was granted and the deceit checked.



*Leathersellers' Hall.*



## THE LEATHERSELLERS' COMPANY

In 1377 the Leathersellers were known as a Corporation, and the first Charter was granted by Henry VI. in 1444, when Richard Whittington was Lord Mayor of London. It alludes to, and enlarges the powers they enjoyed in the time of Richard II., and the Company must at that early period have been one of considerable standing. They had power of search not only in London, but also in other cities, villages, boroughs, places, fairs, chepings and markets throughout the realm. They sent a goodly number of men-at-arms to the City Watch ; they acquired valuable property, and received additional strength by their union with the Grovers-Pursers and the Pouchmakers. The Chapel of the Virgin in the Church of St Thomas of Acon became the accustomed place for their religious observances, which the Company were always careful to perform. In the time of Henry VIII. they ranked fifteenth amongst their brethren, and were equal in power and influence to many of the twelve great Companies, a position which they have steadily maintained and improved. The Charter of Henry VI. was confirmed by Elizabeth and James I., and by the Charter of the latter the Company is now governed. The title of the Company is "the Wardens and Society of the Mystery or Art of Leathersellers of the City of London," and they have full oversight of all kinds of "skins and pelts called buff leather, shamoy leather, Spanish leather, and that of stags, bucks, calves, sheep, lambs, kids frized or grained, dressed in oil allum, shoemack, or bark, or tawed," and the usual powers of search and punishment of offenders who sell naughty wares. Proper leather was stamped with the arms of the Company. In 1604 an Act of Parliament confirmed their right of search at Southwark Market and Bartholomew Fair, which right was continued until 1679. The Company suffered from the high-handed dealings of Charles II., who granted them a new Charter on condition that they surrendered their ancient one. But when William III. came to the throne these illegal acts were set aside and the old Charter restored. They acquired very valuable property in London Wall, Bishopsgate, Lewisham, and elsewhere, which has lately increased in value. Their first hall was in London Wall ; then they bought the

## THE CITY COMPANIES

buildings of a nunnery at St Helen's, Bishopsgate, and adapted them to their needs. In 1797 unfortunately this interesting building was entirely demolished. Near the old nunnery a new hall was found, which was destroyed by fire in 1819. This was rebuilt, but in 1878 it was determined to erect a new hall more commensurate with the wealth and importance of the Company.

They rejoice in the income of £18,500, and £3000 held in trust. They make an excellent use of this wealth, and are renowned for their many benefactions. To some 150 charitable institutions, hospitals, orphanages, etc., they give between £2000 and £3000 a year; and about £200 to the poor-boxes at the police courts. They give largely to the City and Guilds of London Institute, the Leather Trade's School, the Volunteer Patriotic Fund, and other charities, besides being instrumental in founding a Leather Tanning School. They have a set of almshouses at Barnet for seven poor folk, who, instead of receiving £12 a year (in accordance with the will of the donor), have no less than £290 a year. Our space forbids us to describe many other important features of this interesting and prosperous corporation: its treasures and plate, which time has spared, its charities, and list of distinguished members and benefactors.

We may mention that the Company have several Exhibitions at Oxford and Cambridge entrusted to their final award. They elect to the Preachership of Kinver, Staffordshire, and are Governors of Colfe's Grammar School, Lewisham; they appoint "a sufficient learned minister of God's word" to catechise the children in the parish church of Otterden, Kent, and gave 100 guineas to the restoration of the famous church of St Helen's, Bishopsgate. They gave a donation to the new organ at the church of St Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe, where they attended on January 30th every year to distribute a charitable bequest. Few Companies can show a better record.



GREAT SEAL OF KING JAMES I.  
Appended to his Charter granted to the Leathersellers' Company, A.D. 1604



## THE LORINERS' COMPANY

### XXXVIII

#### THE LORINERS' COMPANY

THERE are but few fragmentary records of the early history of this Company. The ancient loriner made bits, spurs, and all the smaller trinkets of a horse's harness. The Guild of Loriners existed as early as 1245 (Henry III.); frequently their name occurs among the other Companies; they took their share in public functions, and regulated the trade. They owe their Charter to "Good Queen Anne," which is dated 1711. They had a hall at the junction of Basinghall Street and London Wall, but this was destroyed about the middle of the eighteenth century, and since then they have had no regular home. Some mystery is attached to the disappearance of the hall, and the Minute Book gives no assistance to enable us to dispel it. A meeting at Loriners' Hall on October 3rd, 1759, is duly recorded, and immediately after follow the minutes of meetings at "the George," Ironmonger Lane, on October 22nd and November 7th in the same year, but in neither of them is the hall referred to, and no meeting at the hall ever took place again. The accounts show nothing as received from the sale of its site or otherwise; but money may have been received and invested, but no trace of it can be found.

They can boast of a long list of members. Their livery now numbers nearly 450, and they have more than double that number of freemen. Hence they exercise a powerful influence in the municipal affairs of the City of London, and have produced no fewer than ten Lord Mayors during the last fifty years. Though their funds are small (about £1200 a year, derived from the fees of members and income of funds contributed or given in recent times by the wills of members), they are not unmindful of the calls of charity and education. They have endeavoured to organise competitive exhibitions of articles used in the driving and decorating of horses, and the poor widows and orphans of members are never forgotten.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

### X X X I X

#### THE MASONS' COMPANY

NEARLY the whole of the records of the Worshipful Company of Masons were destroyed when their hall was burnt in the Great Fire of London. The only documents in existence of an earlier date are (1) the Grant of Arms (dated 12 Edward IV.), by which Clarencieux granted to the Craft and Fellowship of Masons a coat of arms, which is still used by them; (2) a volume of accounts, the earliest of which is dated 1620; and (3) the earliest Charter, dated 29 Charles II. (1677). There is nothing unusual in this Charter, except that in making regulations for the Company and in promoting its interests it was carefully stated that "nothing in it should be considered to extend to the prejudice, obstruction or hindrance of the building of the cathedral church of St Paul in the City of London, or any other church in the same city which was formerly burnt down by the late dreadful fire which happened in London." This Charter recites that by an Act of the fifth year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth the art or occupation was reckoned as a distinct craft, and gives power to the Company to view stones intended for building as to whether they were of proper length and measure and well and sufficiently wrought. James II., with his usual tyrannical mode of procedure, ordered the masons to surrender their Charter and granted them another. The Charter of Charles II. was confirmed by Queen Anne. The bye-laws were drawn up and approved in 1678. The hall once stood in Mason's Alley, Basinghall Street, where "Mason's Hall Tavern" now stands, but the hall itself has disappeared. The income is only £550, including one charity of Joshua Marshall, Master in 1678, who left £125 a year for the poor of the Company.

## THE MUSICIANS' COMPANY

### X L

#### THE MUSICIANS' COMPANY

THE Worshipful Company of Musicians will during the present year commemorate the tercentenary of its incorporation, and its members are organising an exhibition of musical instruments and MSS. under the patronage of the King and the Royal Family. This celebration will be an important event in the annals of the Company, which claims to be the only professional Company connected with the City of London, and, although chartered, has now no controlling power over the profession which it represents, and is, in fact, more of a Society associated with the art of music. The Company was instituted by Charter granted in the ninth year of the reign of Edward IV.; this Charter is preserved at Hereford and the text is printed in Rymer's *Fædera*, and conferred powers on the fraternity of Musicians to correct and punish those who took upon themselves the members' privileges, the county of Chester being alone exempted from its jurisdiction. It states that certain ignorant rustics and craftsmen had falsely represented themselves as minstrels, the consequences being that much disgrace was brought upon that art, and no slight loss and grievance to our people engaged in agriculture or otherwise. This connection between agriculture and the Musicians' Company appears somewhat obscure. After an existence of 134 years the Company was reconstituted by James I. in 1604, under the title of the Master, Wardens, and Commonalty of the Art or Science of the Musicians of London. The bye-laws of the Company were approved by the Lord Chancellor in 1606, and are full of interest. No one was allowed to get his living by music without the consent or licence of the Master and Wardens of the Company. No person shall unseemly revile, rebuke, smite, or abuse any brother of the same fellowship. Apprentices were to be clean and whole-limbed. The question of competition among rival

## THE CITY COMPANIES

musicians was successfully settled, and any one who should supplant any musician engaged to play at triumphs, marriages, revels, feasts, dinners, suppers, banquets, guilds, or brotherhoods, should be fined 40s. or suffer imprisonment. The skill of music and dancing masters was tested by the Masters and Wardens. No one shall sing any ribaldry, wanton or lascivious songs or ditties at any time or place, whereby God may be dishonoured or the science discredited, under a penalty of fine or imprisonment. No one was allowed to dance or teach dancing on Sundays. No one shall play any kind of instrument, either evening or morning, under any nobleman, knight, or gentleman's window or lodging, without the Company's licence. Possibly the victims of German bands and Italian organ-grinders regret that this bye-law is no longer in force. A concert party was not to consist of less than four players.

These minute regulations have of course ceased to be operative. The Musicians took part in the Ulster Plantation Scheme, and paid a small share to defray the cost of Royal visits and providing corn for London in Stuart times. The income of the Company is about £400 derived from lands at Clapton and elsewhere. They devote their surplus income to the relief of decayed members, and in the encouragement of music. The Company give an annual scholarship to the Guildhall School of Music, and present in rotation the Company's silver medal to the best pupil for the year of the Royal Academy of Music and the Guildhall School of Music. In 1901 they offered a prize of fifty guineas for the composition of an orchestral march suitable for performances at festivities held in celebration of the King's Coronation. There was a keen competition for the award, and a noble march was composed by Mr Percy Godfrey which was played at the Coronation. The Musicians have some treasures, amongst which is a mace, the gift of Richard Loyde, Master in 1729, and a cup presented by Mr C. Reeve.

## THE NEEDLEMAKERS' COMPANY

### XLI

#### THE NEEDLEMAKERS' COMPANY

WE are indebted to foreigners for the introduction of needles to this country, and Spain and Italy seem to have been the principal homes of this industry. When the trade was established in England, the Haberdashers and Mercers sorely pressed the makers of needles, and endeavoured to monopolise the industry. The Company formed for the protection of the Needlemakers was in existence in the reign of Henry VIII., but it was not until the time of Cromwell that a Charter of incorporation was granted. This document is still in the possession of the Company, and is dated November 10th, 1656. After the Restoration, the Charter under which they now act was granted by Charles II. The recital states "that sundry persons using the trade and mystery of needlemaking have for many years past used and practised many abuses and deceits in making of iron needles, and needles of bad stuffs and unworkmanlike, to the great abuse and wrong of the people of this kingdom, and the scandal of the said art and mystery of needlemaking." In order to remedy this state of things, the usual powers and monopolies were conferred on the Company. The bye-laws were approved in the same year, 1664, and relate to the right of search, apprenticeship, swearing, reviling, hawking, and setting marks on needles. The Company has no history, and little income. But in spite of small means the Company have endeavoured to promote the interests of the trade by offering prizes for the best labour-saving machines, the greatest improvement in any process of the sewing needle manufacture, etc., and for the best essays on the subject. They endeavoured to revive the trade at Redditch, in Worcestershire, by offering prizes; but we understand that their praiseworthy efforts were not crowned with success. They also subscribe to the City and Guilds of London Institute, and do their utmost to promote the welfare and interest of the trade.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

### XLI

#### THE PAINTERS' OR PAINTER-STAINERS' COMPANY<sup>1</sup>

THE mediæval painter had a vast field for the exercise of his art. The extensive use of colour in the decoration of all buildings, both ecclesiastical and secular, called forth his skill. In his day our churches were ablaze with colour. The walls were covered with paintings of saints and legendary subjects, scenes from our Lord's life, large figures of St Christopher, St Thomas of Canterbury, St George, many of which remain to the present time. Stonework, monumental effigies, screens and woodwork, were all adorned ; and royal palaces, the castles of nobles, the halls of the Companies, vied with the cathedrals and churches in the gorgeousness of their rich colouring. The painter was the ally of the mason, and during the thirteenth century, owing to Henry III.'s encouragement of the arts, he attained to great skill. As in the history of English architecture, so in that of painting, it has been the fashion to attribute our best work to foreigners ; but the purely English character of the paintings alone shows that English painters were the chief artists. Moreover, we have the accounts for the expenses of wall-paintings in the royal palace of Westminster, and although two foreign painters were employed—Peter of Spain and William of Florence—they received only 6d. a day, while the English painters seem to have done most of the work and received higher pay. Travelling monks often painted some of the finest of these mural paintings ; William the painter, monk of Westminster, was a celebrated artist who did much work at Windsor ; but there is ample evidence

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted for much information concerning this Company to the researches of the late Mr John Gregory Crace, Master in 1880, who wrote *Some account of the Worshipful Company of Painters, otherwise Painter-Stainers*, printed privately in 1880, and published as an appendix to the Report of the Company in the Report of the Commission. Mr Crace was a learned and painstaking antiquary, and part of this chapter is mainly derived from his work, and is published with the permission of his son, Mr. J. D. Crace.



DOORWAY OF THE PAINTER-STAINERS' HALL



## THE PAINTERS' COMPANY

to prove that there existed a fine school of English professional artists, whose services were in constant request both in religious and secular edifices.

The names of many of these early painters have come down to us, being recorded in the accounts and contracts for work done in royal palaces and noblemen's houses. Nor was their artistic skill exercised only in buildings. The painting of armorial bearings, the decorating of the barges of the Companies, the adorning of costly saddles, came within their province. Saddles were made especially fine. Thus for a tournament at Windsor in the time of Edward I. £280 was paid for saddles, richly embroidered in gold and silver, with the arms of England and of contending knights. One of the earliest records of the existence of the Guild of Painters is an account of their fierce fight with the fraternity of the Saddlers, when much blood was shed and many heads broken. "Godly union and concord" were, however, arranged between the rival guilds in 1327, and they agreed to live together in peace and amity.

The mediæval painter found much employment in the old halls, and constant reference is made to his work in the accounts of the various Companies. For painting of the banner staffs of the Carpenters in the time of Henry VI. he received iiis. Richard Clifton, painter, received iii. li. for painting, gilding and trimming the three best streamers. One of the most noted of these artists was one, John Bossam, a painter in distemper, who lived in the time of Queen Elizabeth, an artist of the school of Holbein. He is described by Nicholas Hilliard as that "more rare English drawer of story works in black and white, one, for his skill, worthy to have been serjeant painter to any king or emperor, whose works in that kind are comparable with the best whatsoever in cloth and in distemper-colours for black and white, who being very poor, and belike wanting to buy fairer colours, wrought therefore, for the most part, in black and white."

The Company of Painter-Stainers is of considerable antiquity. According to Horace Walpole, their first Charter, in which they are styled

## THE CITY COMPANIES

"Peyntours," was granted in the sixth of King Edward IV., but they existed as a fraternity in the time of King Edward III. They were considered important enough to receive a grant of bye-laws under the city seal, dated July 4th, 1467. This is a long and interesting document, and orders that if any man of the craft be found rebel or contrarywise to the wardens, or without cause reasonable absenting himself when summoned, he shall pay 1 lb. of wax, whereof half shall be to the light of the chapel of the Guildhall, and the other to the light of St Luke. No craftsman might work any manner of tinfoil but with oil colours, nor paint any church work but with fine gold, nor any signs hanging or standing in the weather but with fine gold and oil colours, under pain of divers penalties.

They were called "Paynter-Stayners" because a picture on canvas was formerly termed "a stained cloth," as one on panel was called "a table," probably from the French *tableau*. In the Inventory of the Pictures of King Henry VIII. we find them always so distinguished, as "Item, a table with the picture of the Lady Elizabeth her Grace." "Item, a stained cloth with the picture of Charles the Emperor." The Company must have attained some importance in the sixteenth century, for Strype tells us that they were charged with the setting forth of twelve soldiers and all their furniture, though they had neither lands nor revenues, nor any riches to discharge the same; but the amount was levied among the brethren, every man according to his ability. The same author informs us that, about 1575, "The Peyntours Company found that their trade began to decay, by reason of other persons that had not been apprentices to it, who undertook painting, whereby much slight work went off; as Pictures of the Queen, and Noblemen and others; which showed fair to sight; And the people bought the same being much deceived; for that such Pictures and works were not substantially wrought; A slander to the whole Company of Painters, and a great decay of Workmanship in the said Science; and also a great discouragement to divers forward young men very desirous to travel for knowledge in the same."

Therefore, in the year 1575, they addressed Queen Elizabeth, that

## THE PAINTERS' COMPANY

she would consider their cause, and give aid and assistance to them. Their petition was favourably entertained, for, in the year 1581, Queen Elizabeth granted the Charter of incorporation which they now possess. It is in Latin, finely inscribed on a good-sized sheet of parchment. On the heading is a well-drawn coloured portrait of the Queen seated, and the royal seal is attached. It is addressed, "Liberi Homines et Cives Civitatis London Artis sive Misterii pictorum vocant Anglice Paynters-Steyners," and is dated, "Testi meipso apud Westmonasteriensis decimo nono die Julii regni nostri vicesimo tertio," being the 19th of July, the twenty-third of her reign (1581). Supplementary to this Royal Charter, there is a deed on three large sheets of parchment, also dated in 1581, endorsed, "The Book of Ordynnances for the Paynter-Steyners of London was confirmed and sealed by the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Treasurer, and Two Lords Chief Justices," and is accordingly signed by "Syr Thomas Bromley, Syr William Cecil, Lord Burleigh, Syr Christofer Wraye, and Syr James Dyer." To each of the signatures is attached the full coat-of-arms, blazoned in colour.

King James II. also granted a Charter to this Company, dated the twelfth day in the first year of his reign, which confirms all the powers of the Charter of Queen Elizabeth. The minute-books, which the Company still possess, commence in the year 1623. They prove how completely this Company was empowered to control and regulate the art of this country : *e.g.*, in 1673, there is a minute, "That the Painter of Joseph and Pottifer's Wife and the Fowre Elements be fined £3, 6s. 8d. for such bad work."

From an early period down to the middle of the eighteenth century, when the Royal Academy of Arts was founded, the Painters' Company included the principal artists of England. In the reign of King Henry VIII., Sir John Browne, John Hethe, and Andrew Wright, Sargeant Paynters to that king, were liverymen of this Company. In the Charter granted by Queen Elizabeth, William Herne, Her Majesty's Sergeant Painter, is mentioned as Upper Warden of the Company. Sampson

## THE CITY COMPANIES

Camden, who is said to have painted a portrait of Queen Elizabeth, was a liveryman of this Company, and his son, William Camden the historian and Clarencieux King-of-Arms, gave them the silver cup in memory of his father.

The various pictures in the possession of the Company, many of them of considerable merit, are by artists, liverymen of the Company, and mostly presented by them. Sir James Thornhill was on the Livery, and Charles Catton, one of the founders of the Royal Academy of Arts, was Master in 1761. He was the King's coach-painter. Sir Peter Lely was also a member of the Company. Among the principal paintings we notice a portrait of Charles I., after Vandyke, Charles II. by Gaspars, Catherine of Braganza by Houssman, William III. by Sir Godfrey Kneller, George Richmond by himself, William Camden by an unknown artist, a picture entitled "Choosing a Deity," by Edwin Long, R.A., and a view of the Great Fire of London. Other artists represented are Francis Barlow, Peter Monamy, S. Ricci, Sir John Medina, and R. Smirke, R.A.

The present Painters' Hall stands on the site of the old Painters' Hall, once the residence of Sir John Browne, Sergeant Paynter to King Henry VIII., by patent dated 1511, and elected an Alderman of London in 1522. He made his will on the 17th of September 1532, and on the 24th of the same month he conveyed to his brother Paynter-Steyners his house in Little Trinity Lane, which has from that time continued to be the hall of the Company. No record exists showing what the old Painters' Hall was like, but in the minute-book of the date April 2nd, 1630, "It is fully ordered and agreed that the Wanskotting and beautifying of the Hall shall presently be set in hand. . . . For the furtherance of which works there was this day presented to this Court a forme and patterns drawn by the care and paynes of Mr Poule Isaacson which this Court with general good liking approved of." This old Painters' Hall was of some importance. Sir John Evelyn in his *Diary* states that the Commission for supporting the sick and wounded in the war had permission to meet there;



STANDING BOWL AND COVER OF SILVER GILT  
Presented by William Camden, Clarenceux King-at-Arms,  
to the Worshipful Company of Painter-Stainers



## THE PAINTERS' COMPANY

soon afterwards the old hall was consumed in the Great Fire of London. We have no record of what relics of the olden times were lost in that calamity, but the Company are fortunate in still possessing some of the pictures and a few relics of silver, and amongst these the Camden Cup. The present Painters' Hall was erected on the site of the old one. The pictures, the gifts of artists, former Liverymen of the Company, still hang upon the walls, and serve to illustrate how intimately this ancient guild was associated with artists in the olden time.

In giving this brief account of the Painter-Stainers' Company, we must not omit to mention the charitable bequests of which they are the faithful dispensers. One worthy liveryman of the Company, Mr John Stock, painter to His Majesty's Dockyards, left to them by his will in 1781 the distribution of the interest of upwards of £60,000 to be paid in pensions of £10 per annum, principally to aged blind persons, and "to poor lame painters of the Company, more or less incapacitated by illness arising from the injurious effects of painters' colours." Mrs Jane Shank, Mrs Dorothy Smith, Mrs Mary Grainger, Mrs Francis Yeates, and Miss A. R. Syddall were also benefactors. The funds arising from these bequests are distributed with the most careful consideration, and under the control of the Charity Commissioners, to about 200 old and needy persons. The Company also pay annually £100 to the Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy for the use of poor curates, which is distributed in pensions of £10 each to ten poor curates. The total income of the Company is £3000, of which £2300 is trust property.

The Painters' Company, though they thus receive and pay away large sums yearly, have very limited corporate funds. They are, however, desirous of exercising to the best of their ability the influence of their guild for the advancement of the art they represent. They were the first of the City Companies to open an exhibition of works of decorative art. They from time to time give lectures suitable for the technical education of young men in industrial art; and they are associated with the Carpenters' Company and others in carrying on the Technical School

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in Great Titchfield Street, where students are instructed in house-painting among other building trades.

Having so venerable a history and such honourable associations, performing its charitable trusts so scrupulously, and retaining so much modern vitality, this Company may fairly appeal to all good citizens to join in the wish expressed in their time-honoured toast, "May the Painter-Stainers' Company flourish, root and branch, for ever."

### X L I I

#### THE PATTENMAKERS' COMPANY

THE condition of the streets in mediaeval times must have been deplorable when garbage and refuse were thrown into them, and when drains and watercourses were things unknown. In order to enable people to traverse the pavements, pattens were invented, and were brought to this country from abroad. Clogs, pattens, galoches, were various forms of the same useful foot gear, and we find that some such protection from the mire of the streets was in use as early as 1400 A.D. The Pouchmakers and the Galochemakers were the first to claim the right of the manufacture of such articles, but early in the fifteenth century the Pattenmakers appear as a guild, although they were not incorporated before the reign of Charles II. By the Charter then granted, all persons using the art or mystery of making pattens or clogs within the cities of London and Westminster, and ten miles every way distant therefrom, are incorporated by the name of the Master, Wardens, Assistants, and Fellowship of the Company of Pattenmakers of the City of London, and are rendered entitled to the usual powers of trade monopoly. The dedication of the city church of St Margaret Pattens, Rood Lane, points out that locality as the seat of the industry. However, pattens soon died out. Streets were improved, and they were no longer needed. The Company has never

## THE PEWTERERS' COMPANY

been an important one, and its income is only about £60 a year. They have a small charity of £13 a year for poor freemen. The crest of the Company is a Patten, which also appears in their arms, with the motto, *Recipiunt Fæmine sustentacula nobis*. The truth of this the city dames of the Stuart and Elizabethan ages must often have experienced, and for which doubtless they were most grateful.

## X L I V

### THE PEWTERERS' COMPANY

THE Guild of Pewterers is very ancient. Tin, the basis of pewter, has been an article of commerce of considerable importance to this country from the earliest times, and without doubt the Phœnicians traded with Britain for tin. In 1329 the Crown appropriated the produce of the mines, when Cornwall was made a duchy, in favour of the Prince of Wales, who drew large revenues from the county. The Pewterers were a Company of friendly and neighbouring men, associated together as a fellowship of persons carrying on the trade from which they took their name. The earliest information respecting the Company is found in the records of the City of London, A.D. 1348, when the Mayor and Aldermen are prayed by the good folk of the trade to hear the state and points of the trade, to provide redress and amendment of the defaults thereof for the common profit, and to ordain two or three of the trade to oversee the alloys and workmanship, in consequence of "the multitude of tin which was untrue and deceivable brought to the city, the defaults not being perceptible until it comes to the melting." Henry VI. in 1443 granted the power of search. Edward IV. gave them a Charter which was confirmed by Henry VIII., Philip and Mary, Elizabeth, James I., and Queen Anne.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

The following is part of their original Charter :—

“The Master and Wardens may have a search and government of all manner of workmanships and merchandises belonging to the Mistery wrought and exposed to sale within the City and suburbs, and in any other places throughout England, with power to correct defects. Further power is given to the Master and Wardens to seize and carry away as forfeited all deceitful and unjust workmanships and merchandises, which in their searches they find exposed to sale wrought to deceive the people. Of such forfeitures, one moiety is to be converted to the use of the Crown, and the other moiety to the use of the Mistery, the offenders to be punished at the discretion of the Master and Wardens.”

The records of the Company are numerous and full of interest. The maintenance of the good faith of the trade appears to have been one of the primary considerations in the proceedings of the Company, and under their regulations English pewter was famous and held in much estimation in other countries. They visited markets and fairs throughout England, and seized and condemned base pewter ware, brass goods, and false scales. They furnished men with arms for the defence of the City, and kept in their hall corselets, calyvers, bills, pikes, etc., and paid an armourer to keep them in good order.

The Company was not long in putting their power of search into execution. The right seems for some centuries to have been exercised with great strictness, nor was it at first submitted to without resistance. But it was not till late in the eighteenth century that it was wholly discontinued. The opposition which they encountered in the first exercise of their authority seems to have revived at a later period. In the year 1729 it was reported to them that much bad pewter was made at Bristol. But the Company were already beginning to feel somewhat uncertain of their position. They hesitated to make a search at Bristol, not feeling sure whether their jurisdiction extended to places so remote from London. But they had no such doubts in 1475, when they sent searchers into



*William Smalwood*  
from *The History of the Worshipful Company  
of Pewterers* by C. Welch.



## THE PEWTERERS' COMPANY

Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and Somersetshire, and made large seizures of bad metal. These journeys, however, were costly and troublesome, and often exposed the Company to actions for trespass, so they may have been glad to allow so irksome a prerogative, however honourable, gradually to lapse.

The revolt of the country pewterers against the authority of the Guild had commenced at an earlier date than this, in the reign of Charles II. But as long as the Company continued in the undisputed exercise of the right conferred on them by Charter, the high standard of English pewter and its superiority to all foreign manufacture were fully maintained.

They suffered much from the troublesome exactions and forced loans of succeeding monarchs, and found some difficulty in satisfying these demands, and meeting the precepts of the Mayor for wheat, ships, men-at-arms, etc. At a later period, in order to prevent the public from imposition, they appointed standard assays, and stamped the goods with their mark, in the same manner as the goldsmiths. This mark was called "touch," and many entries in the books of the Company relate to the use and abuse of this inscription.

The income of the Company is considerable, and is now £4050, of which only £250 are trust funds. Amongst the bequests is one of "Lewis Randall, pewterer, who paved the East Ile of Christ's Hospital Cloyster, and renewed all the Armories of former liberall benefactors to that house, and gave beside fifty pound that the poor children might eat roste-meat at dinner on every Saint Mathias day, if it fall out of Lent. But, if it fall in Lent, then they are to eat good and well made Furmentry, both at dinner and supper." The Company have contributed largely to the City and Guilds of London Institute, to the Working Lads' Institute, and other schools. They also augment out of their own corporate funds the charities for which they are trustees. Their old hall in Lime Street was completed in 1497. This was destroyed in the Great Fire, and a second one erected, which subsequently was converted into a warehouse. A third hall was then erected, which is still the home of the Company.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

In connection with the building of their first hall we have the following account of the cost of labour at the end of the fifteenth century :—

“ Daily wages of labourers, 4d. or 5d. ; dauber and man, 9d. or 11d. ; tiler and man, 9d. ; mason, 7d. or 8d. ; joiner, 8d. ; carpenter (seven days), 3s. 4d. ; plumber, for casting lead, 1s. 2d. per cwt., for casting and working lead, 1s. 8d. per cwt. ; quenching lime (two men), 6d. per day.”

The records tell us also the cost of materials at that period when money was worth about sixteen times as much as it is now. The Pewterers paid in 1487 the following amounts :—

“ Sand, 4d. per load ; gravel, 4d. per load ; 30 loads of earth, 10d. ; 20 loads of rubbish and 5 loads of earth, 1½d. ; white sand, 31 loads, 14s. 6d. ; bricks, 21 thousand, £5 ; lime, per cwt., 5s. 6d. to 6s. ; white plaster, per bushel, 12d. ; grey plaster, per bushel, 6d. and 9d. ; old plaster, per load, 1s. 6d., carriage, 3d. ; new plaster, per ton, with carriage, 8s. 6d. ; load of billets to bren the plaster, 2s. 7d. ; faggots, per quartren, 10d. ; tiles, per thousand, 5s. 4d. to 6s. 6d. ; roof tiles, per hundred, 5s. ; tile pins, 3 pecks 4d. per bushel, 4½d. ; timber, 25 quarters 3s. 4d. ; 2 short quarters, 2d. ; timber fillets, each 1d. ; planks, 4 for 6d., 3 feet a penny ; oak planks, 145 feet for 3s. 11d.”

The Company recouped themselves for the expense of their new hall by letting it out for various purposes. It was often used for wedding parties and dancing lessons, the charge being five shillings, about ten pounds of our money.

The history of the Company has just been written by Mr Charles Welch in two large volumes. He tells us of the feasts of the Company, their election dinners, search dinners, assistants' dinners, and dinners on Lord Mayor's day. They seem to have thought that they dined too often and too well, and were minded to reduce the cost of their feasts. But in 1672 they lament that “by reason of the women being invited, the charge of the feast was so extreme,” that they could save nothing. The following is one of their *menus* :—

“ Itm pd for the dyner of our brethern not dynyng wt the maire ffirst

## THE PEWTERERS' COMPANY

for a ribbe of Brawne xj d. Itm for ij piggs xj d. Itm for spice ix d. ob and brede viij d. Sm ij s. iiij d. ob. Itm to the Chaundeler for salt and savce j d. ob. Itm for floure water and a woman to dresse the mete v d."

How zealously the Company watched over their rights, or what they conceived to be such, may be judged from a variety of entries in their books. In the reign of William III. we find a lawyer employed to draft a bill forbidding publicans to sell beer in silver tankards, for which he had fifteen guineas, with a promise of fifteen more if the bill became law. Whether it did or not we do not know. But it is interesting to find this early record of the metal which was deemed most suitable for beer—"its native pewter," as a high authority dubbed it. In 1696 a Committee of the House of Commons passed a Resolution intended to benefit the tin miners, but equally useful to the pewterers, that neither beer, wine, nor spirits should be sold in taverns except in pewter measures. As late as 1755 the Company were demanding an increased duty on the export of tin, which enabled foreign manufacturers to compete with them. They asked to have it doubled. They seem to have been generally at feud with the tin merchants, who were always trying to raise their prices. But the Company on the whole seem to have had the best of it. In March 1621 they were again demanding further measures for their own protection:—"It was decided to introduce a Bill into Parliament for suppressing hawkers and the buying of tynn and old pewter by brokers and others not pewterers, selling of old pewter, and transporting it and uttering it."

At the King's restoration in 1660 the Pewterers' Company took part in the City rejoicings. Their historian tells us that in compliance with a further precept [21st May] the Company took part in the welcome to Charles II. on his passage through the City on the 29th May. They were desired "to finde & provide according to antient Customes 8 of ye most gracefull tall & comely personages well horsed & in theire best Array in veluett plush or sattin each of them to haue a Page to attend them & ye Company to attend in theire Railes." Twelve of their members were selected for attendance.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

The accounts give details of the expenses of attending the King's Reception and Entertainment. The items include the Livery at their "Railes," £6, 3s. 5d. ; the horsemen and pages, £4, 1s. 2d. ; ribbon for the two occasions, £6, 6s. ; "two trumpets" in coats of "Blew cloth laced," staves and "truncheons," two gammons of bacon with bread, butter and beer for breakfast, porters and a labourer to watch the "Railes & to helpe in & out." The "Railes" were stands, each Company having its own.

It is fortunate that the records of this Company have escaped the fate which befell so many of the archives of the Guilds of London. They are full of interesting details of the lives of the citizens of Old London, and it is also fortunate that the Company has found so able an historian as Mr Charles Welch, whose monumental work will long remain the chief authority on the records of the Pewterers.

### X L V

#### THE PLAISTERERS' COMPANY

THE Plasterers were formerly known as the Pargettors, and were incorporated by a Charter granted by Henry VII. to search, try, and make, and exercise due search of all manner of stuff touching and concerning the art and mystery of Pargettors, commonly called Plasterers, and upon all work and workmen in the said art or mystery, so that the work might be just, true, and lawful, without any deceit or fraud whatsoever within the City of London or suburbs thereof. The corporate style of the Company is "The Master and Wardens of the Guild or Fraternity of the Blessed Mary of Pargettors, commonly called Plasterers, London." This Charter was renewed by Elizabeth, James I., and Charles II. Having in view the rebuilding of the City after the Great Fire, the Charter of the last sovereign forbade any person to carry on simultaneously the trade of a

## THE PLAYING-CARD MAKERS' COMPANY

mason, bricklayer, or plasterer. The Company received a grant of arms in 1546, on which appear a plasterer's brush, two battle-axes, a trowel, the Tudor rose, and two fleurs-de-lis. The supporters are two griffins, and the motto is "Let brotherly love continue." Very skilful were the old plasterers, as the elaborate and beautiful ceilings of many an old hall in the City testify. The records of the Company are scanty. They had a hall in Addle Street, the site of which is now let on lease. Their income is about £1000, of which £28 are trust funds. For many years past, through the Science and Art Department, South Kensington, they have offered and distributed prizes, amounting to £25 a year, to art workmen in connection with the trade with which they are associated. They subscribe £100 per annum to the City and Guilds of London Institute, and £37, 10s. per annum to the Trades Training Schools, Great Titchfield Street, managed by the Carpenters' Company, and supported by the City Companies associated therewith, and in addition offer scholarships at such schools amounting to twelve guineas a year.

## X L V I

### THE PLAYING-CARD MAKERS' COMPANY

CARDS are generally supposed to have been invented for the amusement of Charles VI. of France, in the year 1392, when that sovereign suffered from mental derangement, and Jacquemin Gringonneur is said to be the inventor, though a much earlier and Asiatic origin is claimed for games at cards. In England, Edward I. is said to have played with cards at a game called "the four kings" in the year 1377; but all this is conjectural, and need not now be discussed. Early in the fifteenth century card-making had become a regular trade in Germany, whence cards were sent in small casks to other countries. They were certainly manufactured in England before 1463, for by an Act of Parliament of 3 Edward IV. the

## THE CITY COMPANIES

importation of playing cards was forbidden, in consequence of the complaints of playing-card makers that importation interfered with their business ; but in spite of this Act it is probable that the main source of supply for English gamesters was from abroad. There were, however, many who carried on the trade in this country. Shakespeare makes Christopher Sly, in the *Taming of the Shrew*, say that he was “by education a card-maker.” In the time of Henry VII. the game was fairly established, for he lost 100 shillings at cards, and Queen Catherine was “expert at tables, tick-tacks, with cards and dyce.” However, the Guild was not founded by Royal Charter before 1628, and the object of the Company was to counteract the deceits and abuses practised by the inexpert in the art and trade of making playing cards, and by the importation of foreign cards into this country, and the public selling of the same without restraint, whereby many persons engaged in it had become unable to maintain themselves and their families, and forced to give up their trade and live idly without employment. The usual protective restrictions were enforced by the Charter. The Company had power to rule, govern and correct the mystery and punish offenders, and no one was allowed to make cards within the city, and within a distance of ten miles any way from it, who was not a member of the Company. In consequence of this Charter most of the cards used in this country from the time of James I. were manufactured in England. A duty was also then levied on cards, which have ever since been subject to taxation.

The Company have no history as far as they know. Their income is very small, and consists only of the interest on £500 invested in India Government stock and the payments of members. The history of playing cards is a fascinating study, and possibly the art of wood-engraving owes much to the early card makers. The story of the development of the different suits, and of the court cards, is curious and interesting. Hearts, bells, leaves and acorns, swords, batons, cups and money, have been used as marks instead of our own modern and familiar symbols ; and the caprice of card makers has caused numerous variations. The playing-card

## THE PLUMBERS' COMPANY

makers have afforded English folk by their art much recreation ; and if foolish ones have lost fortunes by cards, and the victims of bridge join hands with their ancestors who hazarded their lands and houses on the turn of the dice or the pip of a card, they have themselves to blame, and not the makers.

### XLVII

#### THE PLUMBERS' COMPANY

THE Worshipful Company of Plumbers certainly deserves its epithet, and stands high in public estimation. It can boast of considerable antiquity. Ordinances for its government were passed as early as 1365, although it was not incorporated before 1611. These ordinances seem to foreshadow the wise regulations of the modern Plumbers. They order that no one of the trade shall meddle with work touching such trade, except by the assent of the best and most skilled men in the said trade, testifying that he knows how well and lawfully to work, that so the trade be not scandalised, or the commonalty damaged and deceived. No one was allowed to buy stripped lead of the assistants to tilers, liggers, or masons, or of women who cannot find warranty for the same. The penalty for this act, or for stealing lead, was that the offender should be ousted from the trade for ever.

The history of the Company apart from the trade with which it is connected is somewhat obscure, but the records show that they have always endeavoured to discharge the important duties devolving upon them by the Charter, regulating the price of lead, binding apprentices, and testing the purity and commercial value of the solder, and the character of the workmen employed in this important branch of the building trade. Their work was associated with the glazier in the construction of windows, when glass was set in leaden framework, as in our modern and ancient churches. Sanitation was scarcely a science which our forefathers studied, but the

## THE CITY COMPANIES

supply of water by leaden pipes was a constant feature of monasteries and mansions, and the plumber's art was often in request for their construction. The old site of the "Plummery" can still be determined in the ancient Abbey of Reading, which was supplied with water by leaden pipes from a source one mile distant. In the days of the great houses of the nobles in London, and when the monasteries existed, roofs were all made of lead, and the plumbers' trade must have been a thriving industry. Weights were also made of lead, and the duty of detecting false weights and measures fell to the lot of the Company. This privilege they lost in 1599, as their fee was judged to be excessive. Their Charter was obtained for the "utility, advantage, and relief of the good and honest, and for the terror and correction of the evil, deceitful, and dishonest." It would have been a great benefit to humanity if the existence of the Company could always have had this desired effect, for fraudulent plumbing and scamped work have much to answer for. It is the laudable desire of the Company in the present day to prevent bad and defective plumbing, and to place the craft on a higher footing; and we shall see presently how noble have been their efforts in this direction. Their income is about £900, derived from property in Great St Helens, a sub-share in the Vintners' Irish Manor, and the interest on £10,000 which they received from the sale of their old hall in Chequer Yard, Dowgate Hill, which they were obliged to sell to the South-Eastern Railway when Cannon Street Station was built. The property in Great St Helens was bequeathed to the Company by Samuel North in 1645.

In recent years they have shown great activity for the public welfare and have initiated a national registration and training of plumbers. During many years they received complaints and appeals as to the serious evils arising from defective plumbing and draining work. So in 1884 they convened a national conference of plumbers, when certain resolutions were passed for the better inspection of the plumber's work and more efficient technical instruction. As a result of this in 1886 a register of plumbers was established at the Guildhall, and ultimately district councils

## THE POULTERS' COMPANY

and committees were formed throughout the kingdom. Plumbers are thus granted diplomas, which are guarantees that they are skilful men. Technical classes and examinations are held in all the districts, and thus throughout the country a body of honest and skilful men has been found, and the public are able to secure the services of reliable men for the construction of the sanitary arrangements of their houses. Throughout the country 12,000 plumbers have been registered, and the position of the plumber has been greatly improved. In this action the Company has only revived the provisions of their ancient Charter, and adapted old rules to modern requirements. An important conference between the Company and the Royal Institute of British Architects was recently held with a view to encourage the registration of plumbers, and to strengthen the hands of the Company in their endeavour to procure the necessary legislation in furtherance of that object. The waste prevention in the domestic use of water was also discussed at the conference, and a committee of experts formed to consider the question of standard regulations and fittings.

The Company have done much in the past, and hope to do still more in the future. They have embarked upon a labour as noble as any that could be taken up by a guild, and they seem to be on the high road to complete success. Many of us may be indebted to the Plumbers' Company for the freedom from many diseases which their energetic and praiseworthy action has prevented, by providing for us sound sanitary arrangements in our houses.

## XLVIII

### THE POULTERS' COMPANY

THE ancient poult sold "rabbits, fowls, and other poultry" in Conyhope or Coneyhoop Lane, somewhere near Grocers' Hall. The *Poultry* in the City still preserves the name of the trade, and that locality was

## THE CITY COMPANIES

occupied also by the sellers of fish and flesh. Sundry regulations appear in the *Liber Albus* with regard to the trade. They were not allowed to buy victuals for resale until after Prime rang out at St Paul's; that so the buyers for the King and for the great lords and the good folks of the city might purchase what for them might suffice. There was a distinction drawn between the denizen poulters and the foreign poulters, *i.e.*, those who brought their poultry from the country to sell in the city. They had different standings and markets for their sales. The former sold their victuals behind "the wall towards the west of the church of St Michael on Cornhill"; the former at "the corner of Ledenhalle," or upon "the pavement before the Friars Minors, near the fountain there." Unsound poultry doomed the seller to the pillory, the articles being burnt under him. The prices of poultry were duly regulated—a cygnet cost 4d., a goose 6d., a capon 6d., a hen 6d., a pullet 2d., a rabbit 4d., or without the skin 2d., a river mallard or wild duck 3d., a dunghill mallard or tame duck 2½d., a teal 2d., a snipe 1d., four larks 1d., partridge 4d., pheasant 12d., twelve pigeons 8d. The Poulters' Company existed by prescription as early as 1345, and was incorporated by Henry VII. in 1504. This Charter was renewed by Queen Elizabeth, Charles II., James II., and William and Mary. The last Charter is that by which the Company is now governed. The earlier ones were destroyed in the Great Fire. They were empowered to inspect all poultry brought to market, but this right has long ago fallen into disuse. They do not seem to have had an exciting or important history, beyond contributing sums of money in response to public calls, and furnishing men for the City Watch. Their income is about £1450, derived mainly from the interest on £12,000 which they received from two railway companies for the site of their old hall in Bishopsgate. They have trust funds amounting to £430, and pay £40 a year to the poor of Barking and of St Botolph, Aldgate, and a few other like sums. They support sixteen pensioners, many of them widows, and bestow upon them £100 a year out of their corporate funds. The Poulters' Company were associated

## THE SADDLERS' COMPANY

with the Vintners' in the Irish Plantation Scheme, and still derive a small sum from their share in that enterprise. Their principal benefactors are Robert Wright (1548), who left to them land in Lombard Street; Robert Warden (1609), who bequeathed some property in Cornhill; James Smith (1731), Robert Smith (1737), Ozell Pitt and Jonathan Brown (1804).

### X L I X

#### THE SADDLERS' COMPANY

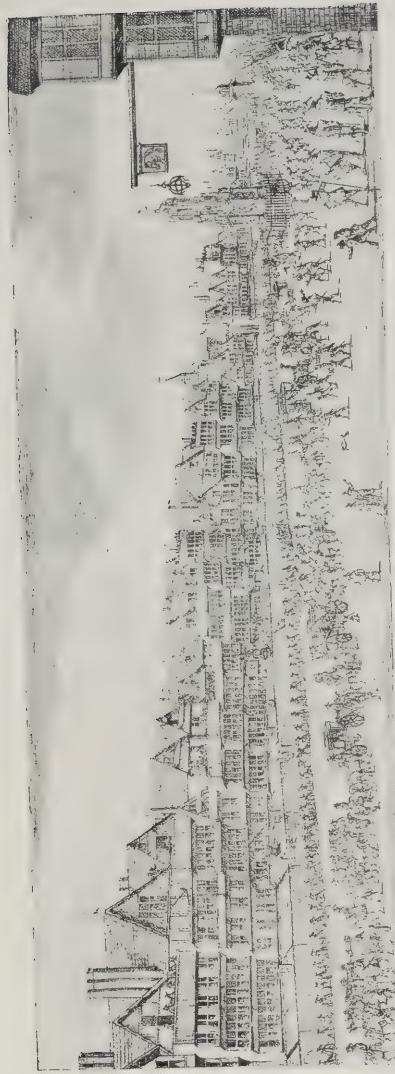
THIS is a very honourable and wealthy corporation, and possesses a history of unusual interest. It is one of the oldest of all the guilds, and carries us back to Saxon times. There is now preserved in the archives of the collegiate church of St Martin-le-Grand a parchment containing a letter from that foundation in which reference is made to the then ancient customs of the Guild. This document is believed to have been written about the time of Henry II., Richard I., or John, most probably in the reign of the first of these monarchs. In this letter reference is made to "Ærnaldus, the alderman of the Guild." This Ærnaldus lived before the Conquest, hence it is certain that the Guild existed in Anglo-Saxon times. Under the walls of the church of St Martin-le-Grand, used by a collegiate brotherhood whose monastic house is merged in the buildings of the General Post Office, nestled the early Company of Saddlers, who allied themselves with the monks in their religious observances. The latter said masses for the souls of the deceased members of the Company, and the Saddlers shared the graveyard of the brethren, and in their deaths they were not divided. In those early days the Guild was governed by an alderman. A Charter was granted in 1272 by Edward I., and also in 1363 by Edward III., which stated that, as well in the City of London as in every other city, borough or town where the art of saddlery is exercised, one or two honest and faithful men of the craft should be chosen, by the saddlers

## THE CITY COMPANIES

there dwelling, to superintend and survey the craft. This Charter was amplified and confirmed by Henry VI., Henry VII., and Henry VIII., and, together with the Charter of Richard II., confirmed by Elizabeth and James I., is practically their governing Charter.

In previous records we have noticed the numerous disputes which arose between the members of allied trades, and however amicable and fraternal the monks and the saddlers were, very frequent were the quarrels between the saddlers, joiners, painters, and loriners. They fought fiercely with each other, and with much difficulty were their quarrels arranged. The bye-laws of the Company were drawn up in 1365. A few years later we find them taking a very prominent part in the affair of Sir Nicholas Brember, the master of the Grocers' Company and Lord Mayor, who endeavoured to obtain the complete subjugation of the city.

There were many internal bickerings also as time went on, the commonalty trying to wrest the government from the aristocratic leaders of the Company, and the leaders ever endeavouring to retain the power in their own hands. Elizabeth ratified and confirmed previous Charters, and reincorporated the Company by name of the Wardens or Keepers and Commonalty of the Mystery or Art of Saddlers of the City of London. In the Charter of Charles II. it is stated that no person shall be elected who is not in communion with the Church of England, or who does not take the Sacramental test. The introduction of coaches alarmed the saddlers as much as the invention of railroads frightened the coachmen, but with less cause. The saddlers' trade prospered, and the Civil War caused many saddles to be made and many to be emptied. The chronicles of this Company are very full of interesting details, which we have no space to record. They had their barge on the river, which was decked with bunting on Lord Mayor's Day; they buried their deceased members with much ceremony; their old hearse-cloth still remains. They can boast of a Royal Master—Frederick, Prince of Wales, who presided in 1751. Their present hall in Foster Lane is the fourth which they have had, and they have never strayed from their ancient home, where the primitive



AN OLD VIEW OF CHEAPSIDE

In the possession of the Saddlers' Company



## THE SADDLERS' COMPANY

Company of Saddlers sheltered beneath the monastic walls of St Martin-le-Grand. Every year they perform the ancient and pious custom of repairing to the Church of St Vedast Foster, attended by their chaplain, paying a thank-offering to God, and testifying to the loyal discharge of their duty toward the poor of their Company.

They have now the large income of £11,200, in addition to £1000 which are trust funds.<sup>1</sup> They give three scholarships of £40 a year to students at Oxford or Cambridge. They have held an Exhibition of



THE RICH CUP, 1681, AT SADDLERS' HALL

saddlery at their hall, and offered prizes for the best work; this Exhibition cost about £500. They apply funds to the apprenticeship of boys, and to provide a scholarship in the National Training School for Music. In pensions and gifts to poor folk they give more than £2000 a year. The Saddlers have a remarkable and interesting history, reaching from Saxon times to the present day, and a worthy record of good works. May unruly steeds never cast their riders, and the Company sit securely in their saddles for many years to come!

<sup>1</sup> This statement is in accordance with *Whittaker's Almanack* (1903), but I am informed that it is not correct. In 1879 their income was stated, in the Report of the Commission, to be £10,243. Whatever fluctuations have taken place since mainly concern the Company and not the general public.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

### L

#### THE SCRIVENERS' COMPANY

A very valuable record of the history of the Company was drawn up by order of the Court of the Company in 1748, by a committee appointed to inquire as far back as was possible into the nature or constitution of the Art or Mystery of Scriveners, and the particular laws and regulations by which they were anciently governed.

It was known in early times as the Fraternity or Mystery of the Scriveners or Writers of the Court Letter of the City of London, and was "time out of mind" a society or company by prescription. Their records date as far back as 1374. The Scrivener played an important part in the old City life. He discharged many of the duties which are now performed by solicitors. He made charters and deeds concerning lands, tenements, and inheritances, and all other writings which, by the common law or custom of the realm, were required to be sealed. The Company has an ancient book called their *Common Paper*, which contains much valuable information. From this we gather that being a free Company they made sundry applications to the Lord Mayor for a set of ordinances. The earliest of these was granted to them in the time of Adam de Bury, Mayor, in the thirty-eighth year of Edward III., a document couched in old law French. A few years later certain "honest persons, the common Scriveners of the court letter," made complaints to the Mayor, John Pyell, that men come out of divers countries, chaplains and others, that have no knowledge of the customs, franchises, and usages of the city, cause themselves to be called Scriveners and take upon them to make testaments, charters, and other things belonging to the Mystery, to the great damage and slander of all honest and true Scriveners. They therefore pray that these chaplains and others may be restrained, that only none be suffered to "keep shop" but those who belong

## THE SCRIVENERS' COMPANY

to the Mystery, and that transgressors may be punished. In 1390 a new set of ordinances was drawn up, beginning with the Scrivener's oath :—

"I, N., of my own proper will, do swear upon the holy evangelist to be true in my office and mystery, and to do my diligence, that all the feates that I shall make to be sealed shall be well and lawfully made after my learning and cunning. . . . So help me God, and the holy contents of this book." Sundays and double feasts were to be kept so that no shop for business, gain, or covetousness should be open under penalties of 6s. 8d. for the first offence, 13s. 4d. for a second, and £1 for a third. Trinity Sunday was their feast day. At the beginning of Lent they should pay a noble for proper apparel, which vesture shall be used principally on the Feast of *Pentycyst* (Pentecost) in the honour of God which hath given all knowledge. Many other excellent rules and regulations were drawn up for the well-being of the Company, great care being taken that no "foreigner" should be allowed to exercise the duties of a scrivener. It would be impossible to record in a short space all the proceedings of this fraternity in early times. There is a curious entry in the *Common Paper* relating to their proceedings in 1497, when the whole Company in good and honest manner assembled in the mansion of Henry Woodcock, one of the wardens. It was then felt that many of the apprentices had not their "perfect congruity of grammar which is the thing most necessary and expedient to every person exercising the science and faculty of the mystery ;" so they ordered that the apprentices should be examined by the wardens, and if the apprentice had not the same congruity he should be sent to a grammar school until "he be erudite in the books of genders, declensions, preterites and supines, equivox and sinonimes." The master of an apprentice was fined 100s. for default of this rule, and for each apprentice received he had to give a spoon of silver to the treasure of the fellowship. The company was at first ruled by two wardens, and then by a master and two wardens.

The first Charter was granted by James I. in 1617, which gave them very full powers of control over the mystery and for the regulating of

## THE CITY COMPANIES

their own private concerns. From many entries in the books of the Company it is evident that notaries and attorneys were considered as Scriveners and paid their dues to the fellowship. They were forced to contribute to the Ulster Plantation Scheme, to which they gave £570, and were taxed heavily for the provision of corn for the city and for forced loans. Their hall was burnt and all their records destroyed in the Great Fire, except that precious *Common Paper* to which reference has been often made. Under the *Quo warranto* proceedings of 1684 they were forced to surrender their Charter, and a new one was granted by James II. However, when William III. came to the throne the surrender was annulled, the new Charter of James II. cancelled, and the Charter of James I. restored. In the seventeenth century some of the Scriveners attained to great wealth and importance; besides practising the duties of their original calling they were financial agents and managed the properties of their clients. The most princely scrivener was Sir Robert Clayton, who had a fine house in Old Jewry which Evelyn describes as "built for a great magistrate at excessive cost. The cedar dining-room is painted with the history of the Giants' War, incomparably done by Mr Streeter." Evelyn has much to say concerning this prosperous scrivener, of his feasts and entertainments, which "might have become a king," and of the estates which he purchased. He migrated when Lord Mayor to the Drapers' Company, in whose hall his portrait by Kneller may be seen.

The hall was situated in Noble Street, and as we have stated in the account of the Coach and Coach Harnessmakers' Company, was sold to this latter Company in 1703. Their loving cup and the Master's badge are the only remains of their plate. Their income varies, and amounts to about £900 a year. This is derived from rents of property in Noble Street, invested funds, proceeds from their Irish estate, and admissions to the freedom and livery. This Irish estate, part of the manor of Lizard, Londonderry, is owned by the Ironmongers' Company, and was acquired for £5000 in 1618, half the money being subscribed by several smaller

## THE SHIPWRIGHTS' COMPANY

companies. Amongst the subscribers to the money advanced by the Scriveners was John Milton, the father of the poet, a member of the Company. Their trust funds amount to about £10 a year, the gift of Nicholas Reeve, a scrivener, who died in 1625, for the poor brothers and sisters of the Company. A much larger sum is added each year out of the corporate funds. They have one pensioner who receives £40 a year. They make grants annually to various charitable institutions, and have made considerable contributions for purposes of a public and charitable nature. "For timely attendance" is the quaint wording of the item of the accounts referring to the payments to members of the court assembled for the transaction of the affairs of this Company.

### L I

#### THE SHIPWRIGHTS' COMPANY

NOAH is the first shipwright mentioned in history, and in honour of that great patriarch the Shipwrights' Company of London have had a representation of the ark incorporated in their crest, which is heraldically described thus:—On a helmet a wreath *or* and *azure*; on an ark, *sable*, resting on a mount, *vert*, a dove *proper* bearing an olive-branch. Save for a massive protruding prow, such as the Vikings used to fancy, the ark of the crest resembles the familiar craft to be seen in our nurseries and toy-shops. The history of the Shipwrights' craft in England is a fascinating study and can be traced from the time of the Celts and their primitive corachs to the present time when "Britannia rules the waves" and the wooden walls of England have been superseded by formidable but ungraceful ironclads and battleships. But to follow the progress of naval construction is beyond our present purpose, and we must confine ourselves to the history of this interesting Company which has done much for England.

The Shipwrights' Company first appear in the form of a guild as

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early as 1428, and indeed there is a presumption in favour of their having existed by prescription for some time before that period, since in 1661 they claimed to have had a corporate life of 400 years. Hence the date of their foundation would be about the middle of the thirteenth century. They were known originally as “the Brethren and Sisters of the Fraternity of Saint Simon and Saint Jude which hath been holden in London by the craft of Shipwrights of time out of mind,” and were established on the river side in Southwark or Bermondsey. The Society had two branches closely connected—a trade guild or mystery and a religious guild. The earliest book of ordinances in their possession is dated 1456. Additions were made in 1483, beginning “In Dei nomine, Amen. It is not unknown to all the brethren and sisters of the fraternitie of Saint Symon and Jude hath been holden in London by the Craft of Shipwrights of tyme out of mind,” etc., and containing ordinances relating to the taking of apprentices and other matters, and more especially enjoining its members to “view and search that the brethren of that fraternity do use in their trades good and seasonable timber, and do their work workmanlike as appertaineth.” According to Stow a Charter of incorporation was granted to the Shipwrights of England in 1605 by James I., and the title of the Company is described as “the Master, Wardens and Cominaltie of Shipwrights, London.” The original home of the Shipwrights was within the City on the banks of the Thames; but the crowded city was manifestly unsuited to the requirements of shipbuilders and shipbuilding was equally unsuited to the city. The citizens complained of the noise occasioned by the shipwrights in the exercise of their calling, and feared lest their operations and the storing of so much timber might occasion fire. Hence a migration was made to Radcliffe and its neighbourhood. Meanwhile there was springing up at Rotherhithe or Redrithe on the Surrey side a colony of Shipwrights who did not belong to the guild and were therefore known as “foreigners.” These “foreigners” approached King James, and for a consideration obtained a Royal Charter. This conduct was very exasperating to the old and original guild, and when this upstart Company actually

## THE SHIPWRIGHTS' COMPANY

tried to exact fines and impose duties upon them, they were mightily indignant. A long and bitter struggle for supremacy ensued. An appeal was made to the Court of Aldermen, who decided in favour of the old Company, but the dispute went on, and as is usual when people become involved in litigation their funds became much reduced. In 1638 they appealed to the King in Council, who freed them from all jurisdiction claimed by their rivals, and not until 1684 was this dispute finally settled and the victory of the old Company fully established. This sealed the doom of the "foreigners," and the old Company, in spite of their crippled resources, made progress. In 1782 the City granted them a Livery, its numbers being limited to 100. In 1830 it was increased to 200, and all who used the trade were obliged to be members of the Company. They have still important powers over the trade, but these are not now exercised. Indeed, the art of Shipbuilding has been revolutionised during the last sixty years. Steam, machinery, the use of iron instead of wood, the subdivision of labour, the invention of the paddle and screw, have so altered the Shipwrights' work that it is no longer a "mystery" or craft.

The homes of the industry have changed too. The Thames was once alive with the work of the shipwrights from North Fleet to Pool. It lingers still, but is fast dying out. The Tyne and the Clyde, Belfast and the Mersey have become the centres of the trade. It has been drawn there because the iron and coal are near. The Company once possessed a hall, but it has long ago disappeared. An old chest which contains their archives is their most ancient possession. They have been very zealous in promoting technical education in relation to their art. Before they took action in the matter there were no classes in the port of London where young men could obtain proper instruction in the building and repairing of ships and boats. They established classes in naval architecture in connection with the Science and Art Department, which was first held at the Bow and Bromley Institute, and then removed to Blackwall. At the Thames Iron Works classes have also been held. They have given scholarships at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, Glasgow University,

## THE CITY COMPANIES

and at the Durham College of Science, Newcastle, and prizes for the best students attending classes in naval architecture carried on by the Science and Art Department. A very successful competitive Exhibition was arranged by the Company some years ago, when a very large number of models of ships, tugs, yachts, barges, smacks were shown and valuable prizes given to the successful competitors. The Company is by no means a wealthy one, its income is under £1000 a year, but it has done, and is doing, much to exercise an influence for good upon the shipbuilding trade of the country, an influence that seems destined to become more and more potent every year.

### LII

#### THE SPECTACLE-MAKERS' COMPANY

WHO was the inventor of spectacles? The earliest reference to them is contained in the work of Bernard Gordon, Professor of Montpellier, who speaks of a collyrium devised by him which allowed a person to read *without spectacles*. In 1360 Guy de Chauliac, in his Treatise on Surgery, refers to the use of lenses. The invention of spectacles is usually attributed to Roger Bacon, but further research has shown that in 1315 Savino degli Armati, a Florentine, was the first who worked glass into the form of a lens. For him, therefore, may justly be claimed the honour of this invention. He died in Florence in 1317 and was buried in the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore. On the stone is the following inscription :—

QUI GLACE  
SAVINO DEGLI ARMATI  
DI FIRENZE,  
IN VENTORE DEGLI OCCHIALI.  
DIO GLI PERDONI LE PECCATA.  
ANNO DMCCCXVII

(Here lies Savino degli Armati of Florence, inventor of spectacles.  
May God forgive his sins.)

## THE SPECTACLE-MAKERS' COMPANY

Unless he injured several poor folk's sight by defective eyeglasses, it is difficult to understand the connection between his prayer for pardon and his useful invention.

Spectacles seem to have been in common use in Italy in the fifteenth century, as in the life of Carlo Leno, a statesman-warrior of Venice, it is recorded as an unusual circumstance that although he lived to fourscore years he never used spectacles.

Of the early history of the Company there are no records. Probably they were destroyed in the Great Fire. It received a Charter in 1629, granted by Charles I. for the better order, rule, and government of those using the art of spectacle-making. The Company exercised control over the trade up to the end of the eighteenth century, and a livery was granted to them by the Court of Aldermen in 1809.

The Company is a very large one and has about 1300 members, and 350 on the Livery. It is very popular, and membership confers many advantages. Pensions and donations are given to those who fall into distressed circumstances, and many social, municipal and parliamentary advantages are conferred on their more fortunate brethren. It has many distinguished names upon its roll of members, and about twenty have been elected Lord Mayor of London. There is now an actual connection between the trade of the making and selling of spectacles and the Company, who are regarded and appealed to as the head of the industry.

The property of the Company is small and has been accumulated from voluntary payments made almost entirely by the members on their admission. They own a house in Lincoln's Inn Fields, let in chambers, which yields an income of £600 a year, and derive about £100 from investments. Their total corporate income is a little over £1200 a year. They have a trust estate, consisting of the Tite and Tarwell legacies, and £1166 which is invested. Besides thirty banners and three silver cups they have no treasures. It would be pleasant to see this large and flourishing Company possessed of a hall of their own, with portraits of their many distinguished brethren and a collection

## THE CITY COMPANIES

made of curios relating to their craft, but at present no means are forthcoming for the carrying out of so great a design. Arms were granted to the Company in 1739, which bear three spectacles on a shield with the appropriate motto, "A Blessing to the Aged." As regards technical education, they voted on one occasion the sum of 10 guineas to the Society of Fine Arts for prizes in connection with the art of spectacle-making, and since that time have taken important steps for the perfection of the industry. In 1897 the then Lord Mayor and Master of the Company, Sir Horatio D. Davies, K.C.M.G., called a meeting of the trade to consider what were the best means for the Company to take in order to better and improve the craft. The outcome of this meeting was the formation of an examination scheme for practical opticians, whereby diplomas are granted to successful candidates. This scheme has been most successful, nine examinations have been held, and nearly 500 opticians certificated from all parts of the United Kingdom and the Colonies, there being twelve diplomats in South Africa, two in India, two in Ceylon, three in New Zealand, eight in Australia, and two in Canada. This system has cost the Company £2000. It is proposed to add Sight-Testing to the syllabus. It is the aim of the Company to make opticians thoroughly competent, and no work could be more important as nothing is more vital to health, nothing more precious than good eyesight. The Company deserve great credit and the gratitude of the public for their spirited action in this matter.

## THE STATIONERS' COMPANY

### L III

#### THE STATIONERS' COMPANY

THIS Company is one of the few guilds which have maintained until the present day their connection with the particular trade with which they are associated. It was originally established for the purpose of fostering the trade of a publisher and stationer. Authors of to-day are usually of opinion that the trade of the publisher needs no fostering and can take excellent care of itself. They have cause however to be grateful to this Company for the protection of their copyright, and know that the magic letters "Entered at Stationers' Hall" affords an excellent safeguard of their property. From the time of their incorporation to the present day liverymen of the Company have carried on at Stationers' Hall the trade of a publisher for their own benefit, and a division of profits has been annually made amongst the partners. The Company has for its historian Mr C. R. Rivington, the clerk of the Company, who has written an admirable account of *The Records of the Worshipful Company of Stationers*, which has just been published, beautifully printed and bound, as a memorial of the 500th anniversary of their foundation, and to which I am indebted for much valuable information.

The Stationers' Company was incorporated in 1556 and is a lineal descendant of the Brotherhood or Society of Textwriters which flourished a century previously. The Textwriter, or Scrivener as he was subsequently called, was an inscriber of legal documents, "a writer of the court letter" who made charters and deeds concerning lands, tenements and inheritances. The story of the fraternity of Scriveners has already been told and need not be repeated. Some of the Scriveners, however, began to write and sell books, and another branch of the trade was formed. They had stations or shops in Cheapside, where they sold their wares, and derived their name *stationer* from these *stations*.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

In the year of grace 1903 this Company celebrated its five-hundredth anniversary, and at first sight it does not appear evident upon what grounds they selected this date for their commemoration.

This Company was incorporated in 1556. Their ancestors the Textwriters were in existence in 1357.<sup>1</sup> What really happened in 1403 which calls forth this important festival? The Stationers have a full and complete answer. In that year the Corporation of the City of London gave authority to the Textwriters, Limners and others who bind and sell books to appoint two wardens to govern the said trades; hence it is reasonably concluded that the Stationers who bound and sold books began their actual corporate existence at that time. The invention of printing brought about a natural separation between the Scriveners and Stationers. When the new art became comparatively common it had to be regulated on the lines of monopolistic exclusiveness, which was the root idea of all trade "mysteries." Nobody, therefore, might print a book without the licence of the Stationers' Company, which was authorised to search for and destroy literature that lacked its *imprimatur*.

Christopher Barber, the King's Printer, wrote in 1582 the following account of this Company:—"In the time of King Henry VIII. there were but few printers, and those of good credit and competent wealth, at which time and before them was another sort of men that were writers, limners of books and divers things for the Church and other uses called Stationers, which have and partly to this day do use to buy their books in gross of the said printers, to bind them up and sell them in their shops whereby they well maintained their families." The Stationers soon became a powerful and wealthy body. The celebrated Wynkin de Worde describes himself as a "Citizen Stationer," and this honourable title seems to have been generally adopted by the makers and vendors of books.

<sup>1</sup> Mr Arber, in his introduction to his *Transcript of the Registers of the Stationers' Company*, quotes an extract from the *Records of the City of London* in proof of this fact.



THE STATIONERS' HALL



## THE STATIONERS' COMPANY

In the closing years of Elizabeth's reign the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London were empowered to grant the licence, while the Company remained the executive power. The Master and wardens had very extensive authority and were not to be trifled with in the days when everybody was expected to conform to a standard ; their jurisdiction extended not merely to those base men who presumed to defy the laws of the Company and set up presses without authority, but to legitimate members of the craft who were so abandoned as to eat meat on fast-days or irreligious enough to refuse to go to church.

The first Charter was granted to the Company in 1556 by Queen Mary and her Spanish spouse. One of the objects set forth in the document is the curbing of the power of the press and to find a suitable remedy for the troubles arising from "certain seditious and heretical books, rhymes and treatises which are daily published and printed by divers scandalous, malicious, schismatical and heretical persons, not only moving our subjects and lieges to sedition and disobedience against us, our crown and liberty, but also to renew and move very great and detestable heresies against the faith and sound doctrine of Holy Mother Church."

The Queen might well wish at this time to suppress obnoxious "books, ballads, rhymes and interludes," as there was much popular indignation against the Spanish marriage, and religious persecution was at that period at its height. Hence there were many books and pamphlets in circulation which were not exactly pleasant reading for her Majesty and her Spanish spouse.

John Daye, born in 1515, was the first livery man. He published Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, to which reference is made on his tomb in the humorous fashion prevalent at his time :—

"Here lies the Daye that darkness could not blynde.'

"He set a Fox to wright how martyrs runne  
By death to life."

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His widow probably married a man named Stone. Hence this "merry jest" proceeds :—

"Als was the last encreaser of his store,  
Who mourning long for being left alone  
Sett upp this tombe, her self turned to a Stone."



JOHN DAYE, FIRST LIVERYMAN,  
STATIONERS' HALL

The Charter was renewed by Queen Elizabeth in 1559 and subsequent monarchs, and the action of the Company in checking the publishing of books obnoxious to the authorities was often found useful, and the Star Chamber Court for purposes of its own upheld their jurisdiction. The affairs of the Company prospered in spite of forced loans and other exactions. The Civil War tried their resources, and they were forced to sell their plate.

Very minute regulations were framed with regard to the use of livery gowns. Some of them were adorned with lace and embroidery, and were deemed too gay for sober-minded citizens of London and their use prohibited. Falling

bands, slashed doublets and other indecent apparel were fashionable in 1635, but these were pronounced to be improper, and only ruff bands were to be worn by the assistants, while the Livery had fur facings. In 1679 they had a barge which took part in the civic pageants on the Thames, to which we have already alluded, and the writer has frequently visited the Stationers' Barge, which was sold to Oriel College,

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Oxford, and for a long period used as the Boat Club barge of that college.

The Company established its copyright register at the beginning of the sixteenth century, though there was possibly an earlier one. As long ago as 1662 Parliament required all printed works to be enrolled at Stationers' Hall, and when property in literary and artistic production became of such value as to be worth safe-guarding, the legislature found in this institution a Copyright Register ready to hand. It was in 1842 that Parliament made registration a condition precedent to the right to sue for infringement of copyright, and since that time "Entered at Stationers' Hall" has become a household word, and the Company has been recognised as the guardian of English copyright and the protector of authors' rights. And not only is printed matter protected but engravings, photographs, designs and plans, and all matters that come under the Berne Convention here find an effectual safeguard against piracy.

The Stationers have frequently changed their home. Their first hall was in Clement's Court, Milk Street, Cheapside, which was convenient for their stations in that busy mart. Thence they migrated, about 1570, to St Paul's Churchyard, to Peter College, where a noted printer, named William Seres, had set up a printing press. Again they left their hall, which they let to a vintner for a tavern, and took up their quarters at Abergavenny House, near Amen Corner. This new hall fell into very bad repair, and they had slender means for its reconstruction; so they determined about 1660 to sell their interest in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* to provide money for rebuilding it. They might have spared themselves their pains, as a few years later the Great Fire consumed their hall with all its contents; the registers happily were spared, having probably been in the custody of the clerk at his house in Clerkenwell. In 1674 they rebuilt their hall, and had it wainscoted by Stephen Colledge at a cost of £300. The present screen is his work. Colledge was hanged at Oxford in 1681.

The hall was used for divers purposes. It was let for funerals. It

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was used as a parish church while St Martin's, Ludgate, was being repaired. St Cecilia's feast, for which John Dryden wrote an ode, was held there for many years. Lotteries were drawn there, and in 1745 the Surgeons' Company were allowed to use the hall upon "condition that no dissections were made therein." On the west side of the hall is a small garden, wherein the Master and wardens burnt the heretical books which were condemned by the ecclesiastical authorities. A fine plane tree continues to flourish upon the ashes of these books.

The most ancient and curious record of the Company is the first warden's account book. It is bound in leather and the cover is ornamented with the figures of a stag, a hare, and some other animal. The arms of the Company represent St John the Evangelist in the act of blessing and holding a cup from which is rising the serpent of wisdom. The eagle of St John appears on the shield, holding in its beak a penner and inkhorn.

The Company in ancient times possessed a store of fine plate, each Master being expected to present to the Company some piece weighing not less than 14 oz. But, as I have said, the troubles of the Stationers and the cost of rebuilding their hall obliged them to sell their gathered store. This was in 1693. Since that time they have received some beautiful seventeenth-century cups, bowls and flagons, including a silver salver, the gift of the widow of Samuel Mearn, bookbinder to Charles II., who was Master in 1679, two gilt monteiths and collars made in 1729 out of old plate, and many other interesting pieces.

The Company was formed partly for the purpose of creating a joint stock fund for trading purposes, and it is important to notice that from the earliest times to the present day this trading has been continued to the great advantage of the poorer members of the Company and the widows of deceased partners. There were originally five different trading stocks—the Ballad Stock, the Bible Stock, the Irish, Latin and English Stocks. There was also at one time a Scotch Stock, the Company holding a patent for printing in Scotland granted by the Scotch Parliament, but



SOME PRINCIPAL PIECES OF THE PLATE OF THE  
STATIONERS' COMPANY

From "A Short Account of the Worshipful Company of Stationers"



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this was abandoned as it was not very profitable. The Bible Stock was a large source of revenue. Unfortunately a dispute arose between the Stationers and the Queen's printer, who claimed to have the sole right of printing copies of the Holy Scriptures. It was agreed that Richard Jugge should print the Bible in quarto and the Testament in decimo sexto, and that all other Bibles should be printed by the Company.

The uniformity of the text of the Bible caused some trouble as variations were not uncommon. One printer in the time of Charles I. produced the "Wicked Bible," which omitted the important negative in the Seventh Commandment. He was summoned to appear before the High Commission Court and fined £3000. The Company does not claim this printer as a member.

The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were formidable competitors, who claimed the right of printing all bibles, prayer-books, grammars, psalms, psalters, primers and books of common law, while almanacs were the special property of the Company.

We owe much to the Company for the interest the partners took in the revision of the Bible. They paid part of the cost of the production of the present authorised version, and provided accommodation at the hall for the revisers. The monopoly which the Company enjoyed for many years of printing psalms, psalters, primers, "Almanackes and Prognostycacions," as well as the Catechism, was swept away about 1800 A.D., but the English Stock survives and brings gain to the fortunate partners.

We should like to dwell on the numerous entries contained in the Records of the Company which abound in bibliographical interest. We should like to record the names of illustrious printers who have bestowed honour on the Company, but space forbids, and I would refer the curious reader to the pages of Mr Rivington's *History of the Stationers' Company*, where he will find much to interest him.

We have noticed the numerous benefits which the Stationers confer on the public at the present time, and also the great services which they have rendered in the past. They have but a small corporate income in

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addition to their trust funds. Many benefactors have given of their wealth for the benefit of their poorer brethren. The most important gift was that of £1000 by Alderman John Norton, which was laid out in the purchase of an estate in Wood Street and forms part of the endowment of the Stationers' School, a large and flourishing middle-class day-school at Hornsey where about 400 boys are educated. The same benefactor left a bequest for a sermon to be preached at St Faith's on Ash Wednesday, 2d. each and a penny loaf to twelve poor persons, and the rest to be laid out in cakes and ale for the refreshment of the liverymen before or after the sermon. There are several other bequests for the apprenticing of children and the benefit of poor printers, compositors, pressmen, and freemen and their widows. Former members of the Company seem to have been very fond of endowing sermons, and Luke Hansard, in 1818, left money for the purpose of giving a Prayer Book to every youth bound apprentice at the hall. In addition to the charitable bequests administered by the Company, the partners of the trading stock give about £400 a year to the poor freemen ; they have 168 pensioners on their list ; they subscribe liberally to various charities, support their school, and do much to promote the welfare of the trade with which they have been associated for the last five hundred years.

### LIV

#### THE TALLOW CHANDLERS' COMPANY

THIS Company can boast of great antiquity and possesses several Charters and documents of much interest. It owes its origin from the natural tendency of members of the same craft meeting together to discuss matters connected with their trade, and for mutual support and good fellowship. From the archives of the Company, which happily were saved from destruction in the Great Fire by the energy of the Master at



Sir Joseph Sheldon.  
Lord Mayor 1676-7.  
From *The Records of the Worshipful Company of  
Tallow Chandlers* by M. F. Monier Williams.



## THE TALLOW CHANDLERS' COMPANY

that time, it appears that the Society of Tallow Chandlers existed as far back as 1426, when letters patent were granted by Henry VI. to the Master and wardens, empowering them to search for and destroy all bad and adulterated oils. In 1456 the Company had attained sufficient importance to entitle them to a grant of armorial bearings made by John Smert, Garter King-at-Arms, to John Priour, John Thurlow, William Blackman, and Richard Grenecroft, sworn wardens or keepers (*gardiens*), and several other notable men of the trade and company of Tallow Chandlers (*Chandeliuers de Suif*). Six years later, in 1462, they obtained their first Charter granted to them by Edward IV. It was addressed "to our beloved and faithful subjects the Freemen of the Mystery or Art of Talough Chaundelers of our City of London." The Company held its course during the troublous times of the Reformation, obtaining confirmation Charters from Henry VII., Edward VI., Philip and Mary, Elizabeth, James I., Charles II., and James II. The Charter of Queen Elizabeth gave them power to search for, weigh and measure, all soap, vinegar, barrelled butter, salt, oils and hops within the suburbs, and mark all good vessels with the Rose and Crown Imperial. The same troubles and persecutions which beset other fraternities tried them during the Reformation period, and many attempts were made to seize and confiscate their property on the ground that it had been given either wholly or partially for superstitious uses. But happily they were able to ward off these attacks and retain their possessions, which were confirmed to them by the Charter of James I.

A grant of supporters to the Arms of the Company was made to them in 1602 under the hand and seal of Camden, the historian, then Clarencieux King-at-Arms. In this grant it is stated "that the Company are to take their place after their ancienty at all feasts and other solemn processions as the 17th Company of the City." The Company now ranks 21st in the list, and it is not known how they lost their proper rank.

The Great Fire carried disaster to the Company and destroyed their

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hall in Dowgate Hill, besides several other houses in their possession. The hall was rebuilt in 1672, and remains now in much the same condition in which it then was. It was restored in 1871. Part of the old quadrangle has been let for building. Happily the documents were saved, as I have already stated, by the brave action of the Master, whose memory should be highly honoured by his successors. Charles II. tyrannically ordered that the Charters and privileges of the Company should be surrendered to the Crown ; but these were restored to them by William III. They gave the statue of Henry VII. in the Royal Exchange in 1684. The last occasion on which they exercised their ancient rights and destroyed defective candles was in 1709. But the times were out of joint for such old customs. The injured tallow-chandlers whose goods they destroyed took proceedings against the Company for damages and won their case. They have wisely not attempted to enforce their rights since.

The immediate neighbourhood of their hall in Dowgate Hill was evidently the seat of the industry, and Candlewick Street preserves the memory of the place where their trade was carried on.

The Tallow Chandlers have a trust income of about £220. Roger Monk (d. 1831) was a benefactor to the Company. He left about £7000 to be invested in order to provide annual pensions for poor living men or their widows, who are to be called "Mr Monk's Pensioners," a dinner for the oyster meters of the city, a twelfth-night cake for the Covent Garden Theatrical Company, and dinners in honour of His Majesty's birthday for the Yeomen of the Guard and the gentlemen Pensioners. The Charity Commissioners have approved of a new scheme for the disposal of the money left for the feast of the oyster meters, and the money will be applied to needy persons engaged in the fish trade. The Company subscribed £315 to the City and Guilds of London Institute for the advancement of technical education.

## THE TIN-PLATE WORKERS' COMPANY

LV

THE TIN-PLATE WORKERS *ALIAS* WIRE-WORKERS' COMPANY

IN the accounts which have come down to us from such early historians as Polybius of Arcadia (B.C. 130), Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, we gather that the tin mines of Cornwall were worked long before the advent of the Romans. The Phœnicians traded with the inhabitants of our islands and kept the secret of the source of their supplies, and the bronze-using Celts must have known and used this metal, which forms part of the bronze of which they made their swords and spear heads. The Saxons, too, used tin for the bosses of their shields, and from their time to this it has been of constant service, whether for weapons of war or for biscuit boxes. Tin-plate workers, commonly called in these days tinmen, practise an ancient craft, and their guild can boast of high antiquity, though its history is involved in some obscurity. In the time of Edward IV. the Wire-workers' Company existed, and was associated with the Pinners; the account books of the two bodies of craftsmen (*temp. Edward IV.*) are among the Egerton MSS. in the British Museum. The Charter of Queen Elizabeth granted to the Girdlers directed that the three arts or mysteries called Pinners, Wyer-workers and Girdlers should be joined into one body corporate. Modern users of pins will not see the cause of the connection between the Wire-workers and Pinners; but the old-fashioned pin, which has only recently become obsolete, was an elaborately-constructed implement consisting of a shank with a separate head of fine wire twisted round and secured to it. The history of the domestic pin needs not to be discussed here. In 1483 their importation was prohibited by statute. They were then usually made of brass. In the sixteenth century a large number came to England from France, until in 1626 John Tilsby introduced pin-making into Gloucestershire. In 1636 the Pinners of London separated themselves from the Wire-workers,

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and obtained a special Charter, building for themselves a hall, but they have now ceased to exist. The present clerk of the Company of Tin-plate Workers *alias* Wire-workers, Mr E. A. Ebblewhite, F.S.A., has discovered a document in the British Museum which proves the existence of the Wire-workers Guild in 1587, and recites : “ Reasons sett downe on behalf of the Goueno’rs and Assistants and Society and their Fermers (*farmers*) of the Wier-worker for the havinge and obteyninge of the Trade and traffique of yron wyer and woolle cardes ” (*i.e.*, instruments for combing wool). The reasons set forth would commend themselves to the advocates of Protection and prove admirable arguments for the new fiscal policy. The Company obtained a Charter from Charles II. in 1671. This Charter is granted to “ the Master, Wardens, Assistants and Commonalty of the Art and Mystery of Tin-plate Workers *alias* Wire-workers of the City of London.” From the fact that the leader of the movement for establishing a separate company, and its first master, Thomas Aris, was a member of the Ironmongers’ Company, together with other evidence, it may be concluded that this Company was associated with the Ironmongers’. They have a small trust fund, bequeathed by Mr John Miers in 1870, which enables them to grant pensions to the poor of the Company, and they propose to build almshouses with money left by John White. They have held some exhibitions of tin and wire-work for the purpose of promoting the prosperity of the two trades with which they are associated, and these have been very successful. The Company has been most active in advancing the interests of their industries. In 1899 they offered valuable prizes to designers and workmen for the best original productions of articles of commercial value in tin-plate and wire ; in 1900 they awarded the first apprentice’s diploma, and in 1901 a conference took place between the Company and representatives of the City and Guilds Institute with the view of advancing the welfare of their trades.

## THE TYLERS' & BRICKLAYERS' COMPANY

### LVI

#### THE TYLERS' AND BRICKLAYERS' COMPANY

ACCORDING to the *Liber Albus* of the City of London the industry of Tyler and Bricklayer seems to have been identical. In ancient times our city houses were roofed with thatch, which easily caught fire. Hence it was ordered that tiled roofs should be substituted. The same process went on in other towns. Thus at Reading the change was made about 1443, for then an order was made that fines for various offences should be levied in tiles. A barber was fined 300 tiles for shaving anyone after 10 p.m. from Easter to Michaelmas, or 9 p.m. from Michaelmas to Easter. One John Bristo was fined 2100 tiles for shaving seven customers, but the number was reduced to 1200 on the score of poverty. The change took place in London in the thirteenth century, and several orders were issued by the Mayor for the substitution of tiles for thatch. In 1356 there were divers dissensions between "the masons who were hewers and the light masons and setters, because their trade had not been regulated in due manner by the government of folks in the trade," so the Mayor caused "all good folks of the said trade to be summoned before him to have from them good and due information how their trade might be best ordered and ruled for the profit of the common people; whereupon the good folks chose from among themselves twelve of the most skilful men of their trade," and a fraternity seems to have formed; but it does not appear to have been of a permanent character as the good folks of the trade were ordered to be chosen and sworn every time that need shall be to oversee the trade. In 1362 the Tilers were bidden not to ask greater wages by reason of the great tempest.

Previous to the granting of the Charter the Fellowship was governed by the master and *custodes* or wardens of the Fellowship, who had been in the habit, time out of mind, of making divers ancient rules, ordinances,

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and orders for the conservation, rule, good order, and government of the Fellowship.

A Charter of Queen Elizabeth, dated 3rd August 1568, gave the Master and wardens certain rights and privileges.

A Charter of Queen Elizabeth, dated 14th July 1571, gave the Master and wardens power to search and view bricks, tiles, and the materials whereof they are made, and to fine makers and holders of bad and imperfect bricks, tiles, and materials and work. This Charter contains provisions as to the taking of apprentices, keeping order among the craft, powers to have a beadle—a clerk—to recover penalties, to appease controversies, to keep courts. It also contains provisions as to the several oaths to be taken by members of the Company.

A Charter of James I., dated 20th April 1604, incorporates the members of the Company, gives them perpetual succession, with power to plead, to have a common seal, to choose a Master and two wardens, to hold land, make rules and ordinances for the government of the company, to levy fines, to admit and expel members, to govern the freemen, and to punish for bad work and materials. This Charter is dated from Gorambury.

A Charter of James II., dated 18th February 1685, incorporates the Company, gives perpetual succession, with power to have, purchase, receive, and possess land and goods and chattels, with power to plead, to have a common seal, to have Master and warden, assistants, and clerk ; to have a common hall, to hold courts.

The Company's hall was called Sussex Hall, and in 1882 was occupied by the City of London College. The site is now built upon. It was one of the few halls which escaped the Great Fire. They possess a few treasures—a master's badge, some silver fish-slices, two bibles, officers' robes and some banners. They have some almshouses at King Henry's Walk, Ball's Pond Road, Islington, founded in 1832 for decayed members of the livery and their widows. These were built by members of the Company out of their own means, and they provide pensions for the

## THE TURNERS' COMPANY

inmates. Francis Field, Freeman of the Company, by his will, dated 1669, left for the benefit of "the poor of the Company" a rent-charge upon some property in Whitechapel.

As regards technical education they considered that the best mode in which the Company could promote the welfare of the trade was by encouraging the system of apprenticeship. So some years ago they decided to apprentice two boys each year to the bricklaying trade, and to pay the premium of £25 a year for each boy for seven years. They took a special interest in the welfare of their apprentices, inquired as to their progress, entertained them and rewarded them for good behaviour. However in the bricklaying and tiling industries the system of apprenticing has died a natural death, and the Company has pursued other methods for the promotion of technical education, having special regard to the industry with which the Company is associated. In conjunction with the Carpenters' Company and other city guilds it has made itself responsible for the technical school in Great Titchfield Street, Marylebone, where a very successful class for bricklayers is held.

## L VII

### THE TURNERS' COMPANY

THE Turners' craft can trace a lineage to a very remote period of history. In the British Museum there are examples of Egyptian turned stools and chairs of ebony and ivory, dating from at least 1500 years B.C. Objects in plastic clay turned on the potter's wheel are mentioned in Holy Writ. Indeed, elegant articles of pottery-ware have come down to us from the luxurious period of the Roman Empire, and also marble columns and bronze objects fashioned upon the lathe. These are referred to by classical writers.

"Throwing" upon the potter's wheel is but another form of the turner's lathe. In Halliwell's Archaic Dictionary the definition of a

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"Throwe" is given as a "Turner's lathe on which to turn wood cups and platters," that being then the chief occupation of the Turners, who, according to Loftie, lived in Wood Street, Cheapside. The art was practised during the four centuries of the Roman occupation of Britain, but owing to the perishable nature of the wood, the clay and metal manufactures have alone come down to us.

It is indisputable that the "wood-potters" of London early associated themselves into a guild or society for mutual aid and protection. Madox and Herbert, quoting Glanville, the historian, mention (*tempore* Henry II. A.D. 1181), that eighteen adulterine or unlicensed guilds were amerced for non-payment of taxes, one of which was the Travellers' Guild, probably an archaic, and even a modern, term for pedlars and hawkers, the Alderman or Master of the Guild being Walter the Tourneur.

It was not till the commencement of the use of household furniture in the Middle Ages that the skill and art of the turner can be said to have been developed. In A.D. 1310 the Fellowship of the Turners is recognised by a code of ordinances granted by the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen for the regulation of the Craft, and these, by Records in the City Town Clerk's Office, were re-constituted in A.D. 1478 (it is referred to in *Liber Albus*) by ordaining a system for apprentices and journeymen with fines and penalties, two wardens being annually elected to govern them. For many years in the Carthusian monasteries of England the art of wood-turning was industriously practised as a useful recreation, and some degree of perfection attained. Stow records that in Henry VIII.'s reign the Turners had three seats allotted to them at the Lord Mayor's Annual Feast.

During Elizabeth's reign the craft of Turners so flourished as a Brotherhood (Strype's edition of Stow calls them a "loving Brotherhood") that they sought a Charter of Incorporation, which did not give them much more privilege than they already possessed. This was granted in the second year of James I., A.D. 1604. Then they established a hall in Philpot Lane, and there prospered. It was, however, destroyed in the

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Great Fire, but it was rebuilt, and they continued to hold it until the tenth year of the reign of George II., and then removed to College Hill, and only relinquished this from impoverished funds in the reign of George III.

Up to about A.D. 1765 the commencement of George III.'s reign may be said to be the era of their success and glory as of the usefulness of their craft.

The progressive evolution of household furniture and ecclesiastical fittings gave them ample occupation. The prevailing taste required ornament and comfort, so that under the inventive skill of Chippendale, Sheraton, and others, turning may be regarded as allied to the Fine Arts.

The subsequent progress of events gradually deprived the Turners' Court of the control of the craft. Fines and penalties could not be legally enforced. The statute of Elizabeth, making apprenticeship to a trade compulsory, was relaxed, foreign competition was permitted, machinery was substituted for hand labour, and advanced refinement and fashion required different forms and models, and the turner's craft dwindled down to a mere accessory to other trades, such as the cabinet-maker and the upholsterer. The turner's art as a distinct mystery had vanished as much as that of the girdler or the patten-maker.

In former days the Turners' Company were possessed of a share in Irish estates, but there are no particulars of them in existence, nor when they were disposed of.

The Turners' Company has been fortunate for many years past in having a Court distinguished in various arts and crafts, more or less closely allied to that of turning. In 1868 the Court, largely influenced by Mr John Jones, F.R.G.S., Sir Charles Hutton Gregory, K.C.M.G., Professor Tennant and Mr John Jacob Holtzapffel, representing horology, engineering, geology and turning, instituted an annual competition for works of hand lathe turning. They offered prizes for meritorious work fulfilling the requirements of excellency of execution, and beauty of design, and utility of application, being steps towards educating the eye and the

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hand. These efforts were made five years before the Technical Education movement was promoted. Since then these principles have been extensively carried out by the Technical Education Acts, and by some of the City Livery Companies, but the Turners' Company were the forerunners and the pioneers in what is now acknowledged a necessary part of the education of the people.

Besides the prizes above alluded to, the Turners' Company gives annually a silver medal to the most proficient student of the Horological Society, and also silver medals for the encouragement of freehand drawing to The City of London School, The Freemen's Orphan School, and The Commercial Travellers' School.

The activity of the Company has attracted many celebrated men to its ranks, and the roll of past and present Freemen is interesting—Lord Armstrong, Sir Henry Bessemer, David Kirkaldy, Sir William Siemens, and Sir Joseph Whitworth, engineers; Sir Charles Lyell, geologist; Dr William Pole, F.R.S., musician; Lord Leighton and Sir Edward Poynter, Presidents of the Royal Academy; Sir Benjamin Baker and Sir Henry Stanley are all or have been members. This comparatively small Company apparently has a much larger number of actual craftsmen than is usually found in the City Companies.

The Company has borne its part in the religious, political and commercial questions of the time as they have passed. The hall previously mentioned used to be let to Anabaptist preachers, and on Election Day the Court attended to listen to a sermon. On one occasion a committee was appointed to interview the intending preacher, for it was felt that his doctrine on the last sermon day had not been orthodox; it is sufficient to observe that the Court had a view on the questions of the day.

The Solemn League and Covenant oath was at one time the door of admission to the Company, but on the Restoration the Oath of Allegiance was severely insisted on. The Company's temporary platform, with its musicians and banners, was duly erected in the line of procession on the return of the King to England.

## THE UPHOLDERS' COMPANY

### L VIII

#### THE UPHOLDERS' COMPANY

THE object of this Company is at first sight not very evident, but soon explains that upholsters is another form of upholsters. An upholsterer, who now supplies furniture, beds, etc., was formerly known as an upholster, or upholster, a corruption of upholster which gives the name to this Company. It was founded between the years 1460 and 1465, and in the latter year a grant of a coat-of-arms was made to them by Edward IV. By the Charter of Charles I. granted in 1626 they were empowered to supervise all work executed by the craft. What this work was it is a little difficult to determine, as the upholster seems to have practised various trades and did not confine himself to dealing in furniture. His original abode was in Cornhill, and he was first known as a fripperer, who sold second-hand goods, old clothes, old beds, old armour, old combs, and a very miscellaneous assortment of wares. His plan of business must have been a combination of old curiosity shop and store-dealer's warehouse. His status, however, improved ; he began to concentrate his attentions on furniture, and his Guild became an important association. Not long after the founding of the Company, an upholster, Sir Bartholomew James, occupied the honoured position of Lord Mayor. In 1489 the honourable Company of Skinners, for some unknown reason, took them into partnership, though they still maintained their own corporate existence. The Charter of Charles I. considerably improved their position, though never wealthy or very important. They even possessed a hall, but this has disappeared and the land sold. Their income of £297 a year is derived from invested stock, and they have a small trust for the relief of impoverished members of their Guild.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

### LIX

#### THE WAX CHANDLERS' COMPANY

THE supply of wax candles was in ancient times an important industry and the trade of the chandler an exceedingly lucrative one. Before the days of electric lighting and before the tapping of American mineral oil springs, the tallow dip and the wax candle were the chief means of lighting. Moreover, the ceremonial use of the latter in churches was a great source of revenue to the chandler. In mediæval churches innumerable lights burned before every altar. It was often one of the regulations of a Guild to keep a light burning before the altar of the saint whom the Society recognised as its patron. Old records often tell of the ploughman's light, supported by the Guild of Ploughmen, the maiden's light, the weavers', etc. The ordinances of the Guild of the Holy Trinity at Lancaster enjoined that at the mass on the day of burial of a brother there should be six torches and eighteen wax lights, and at other services two torches and four wax lights. At Wisbeach the Chamberlain and Bailiff of the Guild of the Holy Trinity were ordered to provide four tapers of wax to burn all the time while grace is saying. Countless instances could be given of the extensive use of wax and of the importance of the Chandlers' trade. The great halls of the nobles required the produce of their skill. Torches conducted the brethren to their Guild banquets, and were borne in procession. The mysterious lights and endless candles blazed in the minsters, and everywhere were evidences of their trade.

The Chandlers obtained their Charter of Incorporation in 1483 (Richard III.) and a grant of arms in 1484 and again in 1536. There is no documentary evidence in the possession of the Wax Chandlers' Company of an earlier date than 45 Edward III., A.D. 1371, which is a petition to the Court of Aldermen of the City of London for leave to

## THE WAX-CHANDLERS' COMPANY

choose searchers for bad wares, and for approval of bye-laws then submitted for the regulation of the craft. The prayer of this petition seems to have been acceded to, for Waulter Rede and John Pope were in the same year "chosen and sworn to oversee the said craft, and the defaults from time to time found to present to the Mayor and Aldermen," etc. That the craft of Wax Chandlers were associated previous to this date there are no documents to show, although from the petition it would appear that it was, but without power to enforce obedience to its orders.

It appears from the documents of the Company that it was founded for the purposes of regulating the trade, protecting its members, to prevent the sale of adulterated or spurious goods, and for mutual aid in adversity. It is clear also that there has always been an intention to promote good fellowship and a kindly feeling amongst the members. Those who were originally qualified were those who made "torches, cierges, prikits, great candles, or any other manner of wax chandlery for sale," but the Company has now no connection with the trade, which is partly accounted for by the fact that the manufacturer of wax candles proper has almost ceased to exist.

The hall of the Company is a modern structure situated in Gresham Street and Gutter Lane, on the site of the original hall which was in existence in 1493. This or its successor was destroyed in the Great Fire, and another one erected which has given place to the present building. The Company possesses some valuable property in the city. The total income and their trust funds amount to about £3000. They administer several charities—those of John Thompson, William Parnell, Nicholas Frankwell, William Caldwell, and Kendall—the returns of which are annually rendered to the Charity Commissioners.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

### L X

#### THE WEAVERS' COMPANY

THIS Company claims to be the oldest of the City Guilds, and without doubt their claim is not unfounded. By a Charter in the possession of the Company, under the seal of Henry II., and without date, the Weavers' Company had granted to them "their guild to be had in London, with all the liberties and customs which they had in the time of Henry my Grandfather," etc. From this Charter it appears that the Company certainly existed in the reign of King Henry I. (1100-1135).

This Charter possesses peculiar interest as it is signed by Thomas à Becket. According to Maitland, the Guild paid £16 a year to Henry I. Its origin is therefore very ancient and possibly had a corporate existence prior to the Conquest. Of the Weavers it may be said as truly as of the Clothworkers, "'Tis your shuttle nerves Britannia's arm and your woof that enrobes her glory." The art of weaving is England's oldest and most important industry. The craft was, however, subject to the many subdivisions into which all trades in the Middle Ages were split up. Thus there were the *Tellarii*, or weavers of woollen cloth for tapestry, the weavers of woollen cloth for drapery, and the weavers of woollen cloth for napery. Clothworkers, weavers, woolmen, fullers, shurmen, burrellers were all connected with the trade, but each had their own distinct craft. The Weavers have been honoured by our kings with no less than a dozen Charters. They resided in Spitalfields when they plied their looms and sang songs as they wove. Shakespeare makes Falstaff say, "I would I were a weaver, I could sing all manner of songs." Edward III. brought prosperity to the workers by inviting foreign weavers to our shores and by restricting the importation of foreign wool. Hitherto the rich fleeces of our English sheep were mainly sent over to the Netherlands, where the Flemish weavers of Bruges and Ghent wove them into cloth.

## THE WHEELWRIGHTS' COMPANY

Edward III. wisely changed this course of procedure. English wool was not allowed to leave the country, foreign wool was not to be brought into it, and Englishmen were induced to weave their own cloth, assisted by the foreign craftsmen who brought with them the secrets of their skill. The Guild of Weavers was then in a prosperous condition, but there are few records which are available for a complete history of the Company. They once possessed a fine hall in Basinghall Street, near the habitation of the Girdlers, but this has long ago disappeared. The Charter of Queen Anne (1707) is that under which the Guild is governed, and the governing body consists of two bailiffs, two wardens, and from sixteen to twenty-four assistants.

### L X I

#### THE WHEELWRIGHTS' COMPANY

THIS is not a very ancient company. Indeed, the general use of wheeled vehicles was not common before the time of the Virgin Queen. Cars, chariots, caroches, and whirlicotes were patronised by the ladies as early as the time of Richard II., but his Queen Anne showed the English ladies how gracefully she could ride on the side-saddle, "so (according to Stow) was riding in these whirlicotes and chariots forsaken except at coronations and such like spectacles." In 1550 there were only three carriages in Paris, owned by the Queen, Diana of Poitiers, and René de Laval, a corpulent nobleman who could not ride on horseback. Stow attributes the introduction of coaches into England to Guilliam Boonen, a Dutchman, Queen Elizabeth's coachman; but this is probably an error. However, in her time, "little by little they became usual among the nobilitie and others of sort, and within twenty years became a great trade in coachmaking." In 1601 Parliament endeavoured to restrain the excessive use of coaches. Thames watermen scoffed at the new fashion,

## THE CITY COMPANIES

and Taylor, poet and waterman, uttered loud complaining against new-fangled ways—

“Carroaches, coaches, jades and Flanders mares  
Doe rob us of our shares, our wares, and fares.  
Against the ground we stand and knock our heel  
Whilst all our profit runs away on wheels.”

However, in spite of the plaints of the watermen, who anticipated the wailings of the coachmen when railways were invented, the fashion spread. Hackney coaches were established in 1625 by one Captain Bailey, a sea captain who loved experiments. The number of them increased. In 1652 there were 200. In 1694 they were limited to 700. It was about this time that the Wheelwrights' Company began its existence. The Company was founded by a Charter granted by King Charles the Second, 3rd February 1670, in compliance with a petition presented by divers wheelwrights, in and near the City of London, praying that, as “certain foreigners undertake the profession and trade of a wheelwright, notwithstanding they are ignorant and unskilful therein, and altogether incapable of making the works used in and about the said city, whereby much mischief happeneth to persons in the streets, by falling off carts and coaches, and great damage to merchants and others in their goods, as also loss and danger to gentlemen occasioned by the ignorance and ill work of the said foreigners, that never served to the said profession, and other great inconveniences and misdemeanours used and practised in the said art and trade,” they might, for the prevention thereof, be incorporated into a body politic.

The Charter grants that all persons using the trade of a wheelwright within the City of London and five miles' compass thereof shall be one body corporate and politic under the name of the “Master, Wardens, Assistants, and Commonalty of the Art and Mystery of Wheelwrights of the City of London,” and gives them and their successors power to purchase and hold property, so as the same does not exceed the clear yearly value of £40; and to enter the shop of any member to search

## THE WHEELWRIGHTS' COMPANY

whether the wheels are of good material and well made, and to punish those who made bad work. The Company did good service in protecting the lives of His Majesty's subjects, and fined and punished many who made bad wheels. In 1715 they passed rules regulating the size of wheels and levied fines on those who did not obey their order. In 1724 the journeymen coach wheelwrights formed a sort of Trades Union in order to advance their prices and shorten their hours, and the Company took "Council's" opinion and were advised that they could prosecute the journeymen for conspiracy. But this they do not seem to have done, and the matter dropped. It was revived at the end of the century in 1782, when the journeymen demanded 18s. instead of 14s. for making a pair of wheels. The justices pronounced their action to be an illegal conspiracy. Eight journeymen were tried and convicted, and the father of the Company was censured for having given the higher wages. In 1798, when the fear of Napoleon's invasion of England agitated the country, the Company subscribed £100 for the nation's defence, and gave up their social gatherings during the continuance of the war. The Wheelwrights have no hall. They have badges worn by the Master and Wardens on all official occasions, and several loving cups, banners and snuff-boxes. Their income is barely £300, and out of these slender resources they have granted donations to special and deserving objects, such as the Indian Famine Fund, the City and Guilds of London Institute, the fund raised for the late war, and give pensions to their decayed freemen, widows and orphans in cases of poverty and distress. A few years ago this Company started a class for wheelwrights in connection with the Carpenters' Company, who provide them with a room at the Trades Training Schools, Great Titchfield Street. They have accommodation for eighteen students. This class has been entirely supported by the gifts and donations of individual members of the Court. Several students have passed the examinations held by the City and Guilds of London Institute, and several hold London County Council Scholarships as a result of their proficiency.

## THE CITY COMPANIES

### LXII

#### THE WOOLMENS' COMPANY

THIS Company was founded about 1300, when the trade in wool was at its zenith. It has borne several names and is identical with the Guild of the Woolpackers or Woolwinders. By a Charter of Edward III. (27 Edward III. c. 23) they had the right to appoint license-men to wind wools. They lost their Charter and most of their documents in the Great Fire of London when their hall was burnt down, and therefore it is difficult to compile their history. Stow wrote of the Woolpackers: "I know not what to say of them, because it seems that there were such men in the Hannse days, when the Wooll-Staple flourished, and that our Wooll-Merchants had their eminency." Mention of this Guild is made in 1469, and they had an honourable place amongst their compeers. In the book of ordinances the Company of Woolmen is mentioned as being an ancient Company by prescription, and it is stated that in conjunction with the other companies the Woolmen were called upon to perform suits and services which the protection of the city and the exigencies of the times required. The Company exercised the privilege of appointing and licensing qualified persons, having previously examined them, to wind wools, and this right was exercised until 1779. By proclamations in the reign of Charles II. Woolcombers were obliged to be licensed by the Company. The Woolmen seem to have allowed their livery to fall into disuse, until in 1825 they applied to the Court of Aldermen for its renewal, which was granted, the number of the Livery being limited to forty.

The hall perished in the Great Fire; its situation is not known. Probably it stood near to the old wool wharf, near which, in Mark Lane, the Company held some property until it was sold in 1827. After the destruction of their hall they met in that of the Founders and were

## CONCLUSION

allowed "to set a chest or trunk to put their papers in." The income of the Company is £376, and from this sum they support a number of pensioners. The alms are distributed by the Master on 16th January in each year, together with 10s. 6d. in lieu of a dinner. A relic of old-time custom exists in the payment of the fine for refusing to take office as Warden. They have to pay the sum of five marks. A distinguished Member of the Company was Sir John Crosby, "Grocer and Woolman," Alderman of London in the reign of Edward IV., the builder of Crosby Hall, the last remaining residence of the old London merchant princes. He built "this house of stone and timber, very large and beautiful, and the highest at that time in London," and there died in 1475.

## CONCLUSION

I DESIRE to express my cordial thanks to the officials and members of the various Companies for the great kindness and courtesy which they have shown me during my investigations in the history, charities and treasures of the City Guilds of London. It has been a delightful task to visit their halls, to enjoy the hospitality of the Companies when the "poesy of dining" is most fully realised, to meet the illustrious guests who assemble around their ancient boards, to see the costly treasures which the generosity of former benefactors has enabled them to accumulate, and to note the wise schemes for the adaption of old bequests to modern needs, and the preservation of those magnificent educational and charitable establishments which pious benefactors have committed to their care. We have endeavoured to enable our readers to realise the wealth of historic interest and associations clustering round the old halls, which the skilled and graceful artist has depicted in his charming sketches, to inspect the old plate and the portraits of departed worthies that adorn the walls, and to realise the debt that modern England owes to these City Guilds. For

## THE CITY COMPANIES

the kind permission to reproduce many old pictures and to make drawings of their plate, to inspect old charters and documents, and for the valuable information which has been abundantly placed at my disposal, I beg to record my gratitude. As regards the future of these institutions, it has been suggested that further reform is needed, and that the Corporate Tax should be increased. Such attacks upon them are to be deprecated. If the tax demanded from them should be enlarged it would cripple their power of doing good, it would diminish that flow of charity which benefits so largely the public institutions of London, and these and not the Companies would be the chief sufferers from any acts of a spoliative nature. It has been impossible to record all the works of public utility which find in the Guilds of London their chief patrons and supporters, but I trust that I have omitted nothing of importance. Several noble gifts have been made while this volume has been passing through the press, and I am glad to be able to record on this final page the magnificent donation of the Goldsmiths' Company to the University of London of the site, buildings and equipment of their New Cross Institute, which will form a very valuable addition to the resources of the University. This important gift is in accordance with the high and enlightened public spirit characteristic of the Goldsmiths' Company, and a worthy successor of many other noble benefactions. In taking my leave of the City Companies of London I would again bear testimony to the great debt which England owes to them for all the benefits which they confer upon the nation, and express the hope that free and unfettered they may continue to carry on their good works, devise fresh schemes for philanthropic endeavour, and maintain the traditions handed down to them from a great and historic past.

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